Saturday Evening Post · December 19·December 26, 1964·25c

POST

SPECIAL ISSUE:

THE CHILDREN OF AMERICA

WHAT THEY THINK • WHAT THEY BUY
HOW THEY LEARN • HOW THEY PLAY

TINY TIM:
"God bless us, everyone!"

BOY GENIUS DOWN WITH PARENTS I TOR

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Forgotten road to success in writing

One of America's highest paid free-lance authors tells of opportunities often overlooked by people who want to write

By J. D. Ratcliff

I can't understand why more beginners don't take the short road to publication – by writing articles for magazines and newspapers.

Last year over 250,000 articles were bought by general magazines alone. And that's only part* of a huge market that will pay well for interesting pieces of almost any length on just about any subject that comes naturally to you.

I've earned a comfortable living for 25 years writing articles, and I've enjoyed every minute of it.

A wonderful life

I've interviewed a dozen winners of Nobel Prizes – among them Sir Alexander Fleming who discovered penicillin. I've talked with heads of state including at least one king, and with scores of the world's leading industrialists. In the past year, I covered stories from Bangkok to Basel to Buffalo.

It's a wonderful life. No commuter trains to catch, no office routine. Whether I'm abroad on assignment, at home on the Jersey Palisades or at our summer place off Cape Cod, I write from 8 a.m. to noon every day – no more, no less. My afternoons are my own.

How to pick subjects that sell

A big advantage of article writing is that you can break in with material right out of your own everyday experience. One of the first pieces I sold was about the adventures of a test pilot I knew. Another told the story of a friend of mine who was caught in a balloon that ran wild. Look at the table of contents of any general magazine; chances are you'll find several articles you yourself might have written.

You can make good use of your special interests too. One of mine is science, and it's provided dozens of story ideas – from eye-witness accounts of dramatic new heart operations, to a report on some amateurs in Berlin who built an astronomical observatory out of salvaged junk. Your passion may be insurance or religion or football, raising roses or raising children. Whatever it is, you should be able to draw on it for articles that could inform and entertain thousands of readers.

Knowing *what* to write is about half the battle. The other half is knowing *how*. To produce saleable articles, or any other form of writing, you must master the tools and techniques used by successful professional writers.

You might develop these skills on your own through sheer blood, sweat and rejection slips. But when I look back, I can't help thinking of all the time and agony I would have saved if I could have found a real "pro" who was willing to work with me.

Today, such help is available to beginning writers everywhere through the Famous Writers School – founded three years ago by Rod Serling, Faith Baldwin, Bruce Catton, Bennett Cerf, Max Shulman, Mignon G. Eberhart, Bergen Evans, Red Smith, John Caples, Rudolf Flesch, Mark Wiseman and myself.

*11,000 newspapers and Sunday supplements, plus thousands of specialized magazines, also pay well for fresh material.

A new kind of writing school

We poured all our secrets of success into a set of specially created textbooks and writing assignments. Then we worked out a method for bringing to each student, in his own home, the many hours of individual instruction a developing writer needs.

When you send an assignment to the School, one of our instructors – themselves all professional writers – spends up to two hours analyzing your work. He blue-pencils corrections on your manuscript, much as an editor does with established authors. And he returns it with a long letter of specific recommendations on how to improve your writing.

Your course begins with the fundamentals upon which every writing career must be built. Then you get concentrated training in writing articles and other non-fiction. (If you prefer, you may specialize in Fiction, Advertising or Business Writing.)

Students breaking into print

Our School is young. Yet students, most of them still in training, have already sold their work to more than 60 different publications, including *Reader's Digest, Redbook, Parents', Popular Science.*

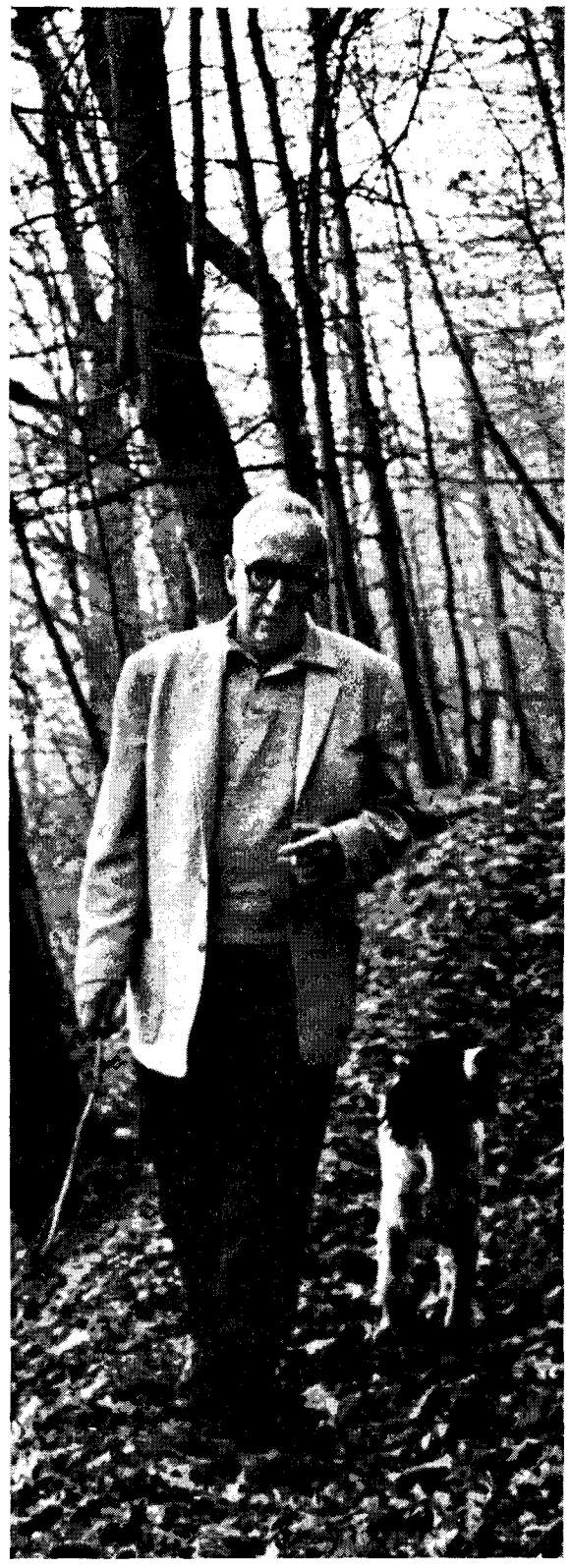
"I've just sold an article to *True* for $1,000," reports insurance agent Alfred E. Gaumer. "This is the first thing I've had published in over 20 years of trying, and I owe it all to your training."

"I've done it!" writes housewife Lillian Maas, after having her first article bought by *Better Homes & Gardens.* "I feel as if I'd joined a club composed of the most vital and literate individuals in the country. How my horizons widened! It's amazing how all of us with a common interest reach out to each other."

Beyond the thrill of receiving that first check, our students find great intangible rewards in writing for publication. As my colleague Faith Baldwin puts it: "If one sentence you write opens a door for another human being—makes him see with your eyes and understand with your mind and heart, you'll gain a sense of fulfillment no other work can bring you."

Writing Aptitude Test offered

J. D. Ratcliff and the other Famous Writers have designed a revealing Aptitude Test. The coupon will bring you a copy, plus a 48-page brochure about the School. When you return the Test, it will be graded without charge by a member of the instructional staff. If you do well on the Test – or offer other evidence of writing aptitude – you may enroll for professional training by the School. You are, however, under absolutely no obligation to do so.



"Jack" Ratcliff on a typical afternoon stroll through the New Jersey woods, where he conceives many of the articles that prompted *Time* to name him "America's No. 1 craftsman in the field of non-fiction." Although he writes no more than four hours a day, he has had over 100 articles published in the *Reader's Digest,* and hundreds more in such magazines as *McCall's, The Saturday Evening Post* and *This Week.* Among his books are *Modern Miracle Men, Lives and Dollars. Birth.*

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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

During the holiday season we take particular pleasure in our children. They are a gift to us, and at Christmastime we see them in a very special light. But the glow is not wholly seasonal; they are the chief concern of our lives all year round. In this spirit *The Post* offers this special issue devoted entirely to the youngsters of America: children playing, children learning, children buying. And, by looking into the changing roles and widening experiences of our children, we also gain a new insight into the America of today—and of the future. / The cover photograph, taken by MARK KAUFFMAN, shows Matthew Bartley, a seven-year-old British drama student, portraying Tiny Tim for our special photographic re-creation of Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, which appears on page 24.

To our readers:

Beginning with the first issue of 1965, The Saturday Evening Post will appear every other week. All subscriptions will be adjusted so that each subscriber will receive the full number of issues originally paid for. We confidently believe that The Post will continue to be the liveliest, most important and most entertaining magazine in America. *THE EDITORS*

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Letters

American Catholicism

"... Some Catholic progressives are reacting so intensely against the historical system that they have conditioned themselves to see nothing good in it; and of course there is a great deal of good in it." This sentence puts the finger on why many older priests, otherwise sympathetic to change, have been disaffected by the shrill insistence of the "new breed" for complete and immediate change.

Edward R. F. Sheehan, in NOT PEACE, BUT THE SWORD [November 28] treats the entire subject of the Catholic Church in America with temperance and with a comprehension, intuition and perception unique in a layman. His article should be printed in pamphlet form and made required reading for every bishop, priest, seminarian, nun and layman in the U.S.

REV. JOHN B. STOKES
St. Francis Borgia Church
Chicago, Ill.

• Bravo! Bracing!

WALTER J. ONG, S.J.
St. Louis University
St. Louis, Mo.

• Sheehan's article was really great! Congratulations!

SERGIUS WROBLEWSKI, O.F.M.
Christ the King Seminary
West Chicago, Ill.

• A splendid article.

THE REV. PHILIP F. CONWAY
Director of Catholic Social Services,
Santa Clara County
Archdiocese of San Francisco, Calif.

• If the Du Bays and the Mallettes attended to their sacerdotal duties as well as they do to social problems, they would be better off. As for Cardinal McIntyre and Monsignor Hawkes—*Deo gratias*. I wish there were more like them.

BRENDAN O'KEEFE
Detroit, Mich.

• Edward Sheehan is obviously infatuated with "angry young priests"; no mention anywhere of the elderly Catholic who in a world infected by the corruption of liberalism looks to the church as unchanging and timeless.

The Mass has been altered to a carnival-like proposition to accommodate the zealots for change; the sacred moments after Communion, instead of being opportune for the intimate congress with Christ, are now filled with physical activity, hymn singing and general congregational fidgeting that matches Times Square in full flower.

RICHARD NESS
Devon, Conn.

• Your article is a direct insult to the American Catholic. It leads you to believe that the church is falling apart. If the percentage of Catholics rises every year, why does Mr. Sheehan want us to believe that most people who think for themselves become dissatisfied and leave the church? Are all converts below average in mentality?

MARY E. DIETRICH
Sylvania, Ohio

• It is talented, honest, courageous laymen like Edward R. F. Sheehan who must be called forth to perform the task which we emasculated priests dare not perform for fear of severe reprisals from our pastors and bishops. Mr. Sheehan has said many things which some of us have been whispering for years, less eloquently and in private. For obvious reasons, withhold my name.

NAME WITHHELD
Philadelphia, Pa.

• If I wanted a Catholic magazine, I would subscribe to one. I am getting sick, sick, sick of all the Catholic propaganda, splashing cardinals and priests all over your pages.

MARCIA J. BARD
Greenwich, Ohio

• Several months ago I wrote a letter to our bishop saying that I could find out more about the Church and her problems in the *Post* than from a sermon by my parish priest. You've done it again. It's good to learn I'm not the only one dissatisfied with a ten-minute lecture on the virtue of getting to Mass on time and a lengthy report on parish finances.

DIANE ANTONICH
Duluth, Minn.

Winston Churchill

Quentin Reynolds's CHURCHILL AT 90: TWILIGHT OF A HERO [November 28] is a masterpiece of perceptive writing. It is interesting to note that "the old lion" has recently had a college built in his honor—Churchill College, established in 1960 as an integral part of Cambridge University. The U.S. Churchill Foundation makes scholarships to Churchill College available to young American students of science and engineering.

WILL YOLEN
New York, N.Y.

Decimal debacle

PLEASE RUSH FORMULA FOR RAISING PORK FOR "2.27 CENTS PER POUND, LAMB FOR 2.94 OR BEEF FOR 3.24," AS SET DOWN IN JOHN BIRD'S "WHEN FARMERS GO ON STRIKE" [NOVEMBER 21]. THIS ARTICLE WILL MAKE IT HARD TO LIVE WITH CITY FRIENDS WHEN THEY HAVE TO PAY PREVAILING PRICES FOR MEAT AT THE BUTCHER SHOP.

FRANK GHIGLIA
Visalia, Calif.

John Bird pleads decimal misplacement in converting N.F.O. figures based on 100-lb. lots. It should read 22.7 cents for pork, etc.—Ed.

The successful spider

Doctor Seuss takes liberties with the story of King Bruce and the Spider in his sermon IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED—QUIT! [November 28]. It was on the seventh try that the spider jumped and landed and fastened its thread, not the 350 thousandth. Moreover, it took place in a cave and not on a "dampish Scottish hillside . . . in the dripping heather." King Robert Bruce hid in the cave while all night long the spider spun, until by morning the web stretched across the entrance of the cave. The king's enemies saw the unbroken web and concluded that the king could not have entered the cave. A spider saved the king's life.

EDNA BOONE
Bellingham, Wash.

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A Christmas Prayer

Let us pray that strength and courage abundant be given to all who work for a world of reason and understanding ✣ that the good that lies in every man's heart may day by day be magnified ✣ that men will come to see more clearly not that which divides them, but that which unites them ✣ that each hour may bring us closer to a final victory, not of nation over nation, but of man over his own evils and weaknesses ✣ that the true spirit of this Christmas Season—its joy, its beauty, its hope, and above all its abiding faith—may live among us ✣ that the blessings of peace be ours—the peace to build and grow, to live in harmony and sympathy with others, and to plan for the future with confidence.

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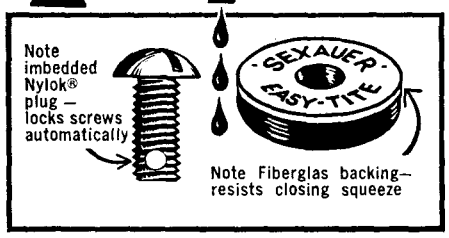
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Letters

• For every tragic case of failure through trying, there are a dozen cases of success. Perhaps Doctor Seuss has never heard the advice, "A winner never quits—a quitter never wins."

RONALD S. LAMOTTE
Great Falls, Mont.

• Hurrah for Doctor Seuss and his sage advice! It is not always fortitude that keeps one plugging at a distasteful task; it may be mere cowardice. The brave will risk cries of quitter and will venture forth to find the best use of their talent and interests.

PATRICIA L. DOMBRINK
Oakland, Calif.

Midwives

What Dr. Louis Hellman has to say about poorly run and inadequately attended obstetric clinics in our land [LET'S USE MIDWIVES—TO SAVE BABIES, November 21] is all too true and a disgrace to American medicine.

Since family life begins not at birth but at conception, care during pregnancy and childbirth cannot be too concentrated or too individual. Can we hope that the planners of the Great Society will one day listen to leaders in obstetrics and study the earliest causal factors in our delinquency and family problems?

HERBERT THOMS, M.D.
Emeritus Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Yale University
Stony Creek, Conn.

Applause

THE PROJECT, by Malcolm Wood [November 21], may well be one of the great stories of our time. We are made aware of the frightening fury of our awkwardness in human affairs. The factual simplicity of the endeavor, frustration and ordeal of Al Nichols are the very incidents we see, yet do not see, in our daily contacts.

SARAH HOWARD
Washington, D.C.

• This is the first "applause" letter I have ever written. Kay Boyle's THE BALLET OF CENTRAL PARK [November 28] is one of the most poetically beautiful pieces I have read in a long, long time.

NEAL LANDY
Canadensis, Pa.

Building blocks

Your editorial says Republicans should unite; "but mere unity will not suffice. The new coalition must honestly reflect the party's essential character. Assuredly, the Goldwater people must have a voice in the coalition, but their voice must be relatively small [REBUILDING THE G.O.P., November 28]."

Ah, Mr. Editor, that gem of a sentence could only come from a Liberal ensconced in an easy chair in front of a big bay window, somewhere East of the Hudson River. Here in Hoosierland we call it hogwash. We of the 26 million, having fought this far and even having bled a little, do not now propose to apologetically fall in behind Romney, Rockefeller, or some such figure and hereafter speak in a whisper.

MERRITT S. OSBORN
Southport, Ind.

Coming soon...in The Post

The Life, Time and Fortune of
Henry Luce
America's Great Opinion-maker

WHAT'S SO FUNNY ABOUT
Jack Lemmon

'WE TREAT OUR SOLDIERS LIKE DIRT'
A career officer speaks out

The cruel hucksters of
'RETIREMENT VILLAGES'

Innocent man up for murder?

Post Picture Credits *Reading across pages, then down:*

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Protect your family with the precious gift of a peaceful night's sleep—every night. General Electric Sleep-Guard blankets provide the warmth without weight...comfort so necessary for restful sleep. You're secure in the knowledge that every blanket is guaranteed safe by the General Electric Company. So safe, you can wash it in your washing machine, dry it in your dryer. Don't buy on price alone...safeguard your family with a General Electric Sleep-Guard blanket.

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Parents will never amount to much!

By Jamie and Suzy Kitman

Suzy and Jamie Kitman pound out their composition on their father's typewriter.

My name is Jamie Lincoln Kitman. I am seven years old and I am in the highest reading group in my second-grade class in the Anna C. Scott School in Leonia, N.J. My sister's name is Suzy. She is five-and-one-half and is in the kindergarten at my school. She helped me write this composition.

The subject of this composition is about parents.

My sister and I don't know what is becoming of parents this generation. We love our own parents very much, but sometimes we are afraid they will never amount to much.

We know we're lucky because we have the best parents in the world. Whenever we complain, they tell us so. And we know that whatever their little faults, they mean well. But we still don't understand them. Parents today seem to be living in their own private little world.

Even though they know they should, parents never go to bed early. They watch too much television at night. And when they go out with their friends, they stay out to all hours.

So naturally they are still exhausted when we start our day at 6 A.M. By afternoon our mother is always ready to collapse. We keep telling her that her body needs all the rest it can get. But she never listens to us.

Parents have poor eating habits. We tell them to eat a healthy breakfast every morning. When they're not late for work, sometimes they will drink a can of Metrecal besides their coffee. No wonder our father falls asleep at his office.

On cold mornings we get very upset when our father leaves for work without a hat. When he goes out without his rubbers on a rainy day, we make a scene. But he's stubborn. He never comes back to put them on. The only satisfaction we get is when he gets soaked. Then we say we told him so.

Sometimes we think parents don't realize how valuable their health is.

They eat too many sweets. They chew gum. If they only knew what that junk does to their teeth. We wouldn't mind so much if our parents weren't afraid to go to the dentist twice a year. And when the dentist says they have cavities, they never admit they were wrong. Parents never appreciate anything we do for them.

They don't stand up straight either. We're always telling our parents it's bad for their posture. And they don't get enough exercise. Our mother is always driving us to school in the mornings. The school is right next to the Co-Op supermarket. That way she doesn't have to walk the three little blocks to shop.

Parents don't act their age. Our mother is always trying to look younger. They often talk fresh, and they often forget to keep a civil tongue in their heads when they speak to children. When we do something proper for our age level—like drawing pictures of airplanes with crayons on wallpaper—our parents use bad language. Parents can be terribly cruel sometimes.

We just don't know what makes parents tick today. They're always telling us to discuss our differences peacefully.

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come alive!

You're in the Pepsi generation!

Pepsi is the one that paces today's fun...refreshes today's people... drenches today's thirsts! Take your choice. Regular Pepsi-Cola, bracing and bold with the energy to liven up your pace...or new Diet Pepsi-Cola, the only diet cola with honest-to-Pepsi taste! Either way, it's the official drink of today's generation!

IF DIET PEPSI IS NOT AVAILABLE IN YOUR AREA, IT WILL BE SOON!

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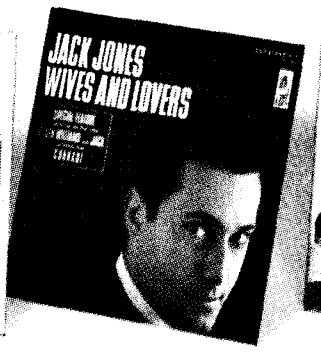
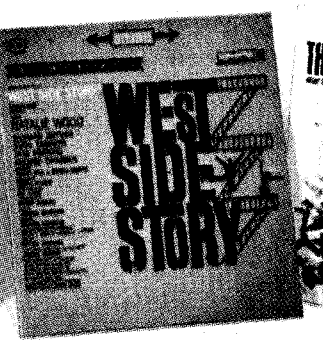
1536. Incomparable versions of: Fare Thee Well, All My Trials, Silver Dagger, etc.

1083. Here is "an abundance of pulsating marches." — St. Louis Globe-Democrat



1457. Charade, Nina Never Knew, I Wish You Love, Fly Me to The Moon, 12 in all

1445. Earth Angel, You Send Me, Life Is But A Dream, Only Yesterday, 12 hits



1037. Original soundtrack of the Academy Award Winner. "Exciting."—HiFi Review

1590. Company of Cowards Anything Love Can Buy, This Ol' Riverboat, 11 in all

COLUMBIA RECORD CLUB'S 10 Anniversary Offer!

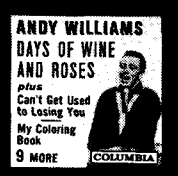
1447. Also: All My Trials, Rocky Road, Very Last Day, etc.

1538. Also: If I Had A Hammer, La Bamba, A-Me-Ri-Ca, etc.

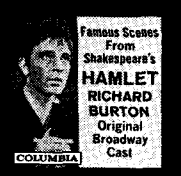
1603. Bernstein "at top of his form." — High Fidelity

1375. Lucky Star, I'll Make Believe, Be True to Me, 9 more

1350. Also: Third Man Theme, Caravan, Solitude, etc.



1002. Also: What Kind of Fool Am I?, May Each Day, etc.



1602. Hailed as "a historic Hamlet!" — Life

1544. Also: Seltzer Boy, The Streets of Miami, etc.

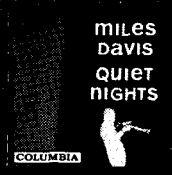
1348. Also: Getting to Know You, The Sound of Music, etc.

1362. Also: Exodus Irma La Douce, The Apartment, etc.

1302. Also: The High And The Mighty, I Got Rhythm, etc.

1283. "Appealing tunes and lush romanticism."—Life

1152. Nine hilarious numbers. "It's great fun!"—Playboy



1600. Corcovado, Once upon A Summer Night, 7 in all

1063. Also: Rumble, The 3rd Man Theme, Honky-Tonk, etc.

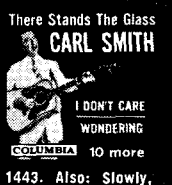
1344. Recorded live at his historic Carnegie Hall concert

1585. Also: What Am I Living For, Don't You Know, etc.

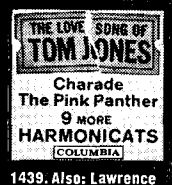
1412. James River, Stranger, What Good Did You Get, etc.

1300. Greensleeves, Humoresque, Clair de Lune, 12 in all

1539. Also: My Heart Cries for You; Hey Good Lookin'; etc.



1443. Also: Slowly, Back Street Affair, More And More, etc.



1439. Also: Lawrence of Arabia, Seven Days In May, etc.

1067. "Perhaps the greatest piano recording."—HiFi Rev.

1186. Alvin's Harmonica, Old MacDonald ChaChaCha, etc.

1374. Also: Bert's Tune, Mexican Market Day, Take Me, etc.

1360. Also: I Gotta Drive, Drag Strip Girl, 12 in all

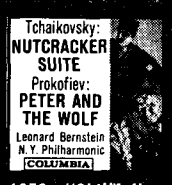
1162. Also: Rovin' Gambler, A Travelin' Man, 12 in all

1577. Performed with "glowing intensity." —High Fidelity

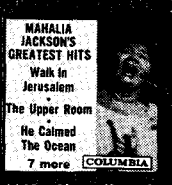
1365. Also: What'll I Do, Always on My Mind, Solitude, etc.

1453. This show is "bright and wholly beguiling!" — Cue

1033. A show that's "perfectly wonderful!"—Ed Sullivan



1070. "Skillfully, warmly, richly performed."—High Fid.



1148. Also: How I Got Over, Just Over The Hill, etc.

1051. Featured on the Beverly Hillbillies television show!

1004. Green Leaves of Summer, My Tani, Greenfields, 9 more

1521. Also: When I Fall In Love, Like Someone in Love, etc.

1322. Performances are "quite dazzling." —New York Times

1441. Also: I Saw Her Standing There, Bits And Pieces, etc.

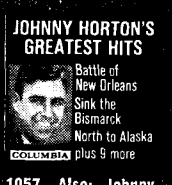
1355. Jose runs wild in Hollywood . . . 11 riotous sketches

1596. Also: Home of The Range, Carolina Moon, etc.

1045. Also: Empty Arms, A Tear Fell, You Send Me, etc.

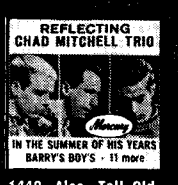
1364. A definitive summary of the Count's greatest hits

1263. "Magnificent performances!" — High Fidelity

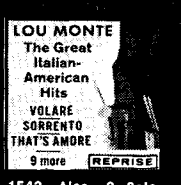


1057. Also: Johnny Reb, Comanche, Jim Bridger, etc.

1406. Also: Daddy, Come On-A My House, Blue Moon, etc.

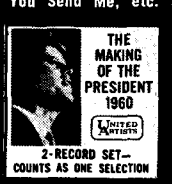


1449. Also: Tell Old Bill, The Tarriers Song, etc.



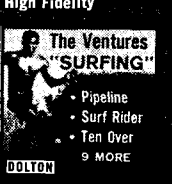
1542. Also: O Sole Mio, Sixteen Tons, Via Venato, etc.

1346. Also: Gigi; Hi-Lili, Hi-Lo; Secret Love; etc.



1407. Hear the words of our late President, John F. Kennedy

1113. Also: A Guy Is A Guy; Whatever Will Be, Will Be; etc. *

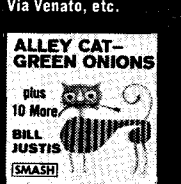


1009. Also: Party in Laguna, Barefoot Venture, etc.

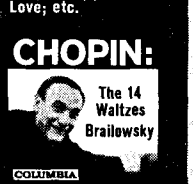
1604. Also: Half A Heart, It's My Sin, Kentucky, etc.

1030. "Music is exuberant . . . splendid tunes."—New Yorker

1061. Also: A Taste of Honey, My Honey's Loving Arms, etc.

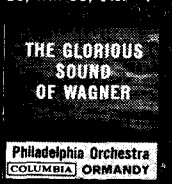


1044. Also: Rinky-Dink, The Stripper, Take Five, etc.

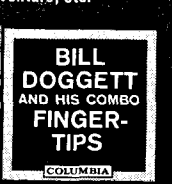


1109. "Virtuosity in the grand style!" —Montreal Gazette

1165. Also: Lovely Hula Hands, Pagan Love Song, etc.



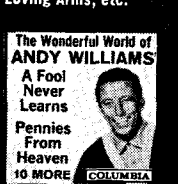
1084. Highlights — Tannhauser, Lohengrin, Siegfried, etc.



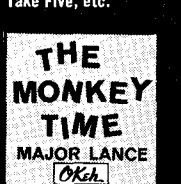
1156. Monkey, One Fine Day, Hot Fudge, twelve in all

1606. Also Lovesong of May, Frasquita's Serenade, etc.

1594. Also: Tara's Theme, Imagination, Laura, etc.



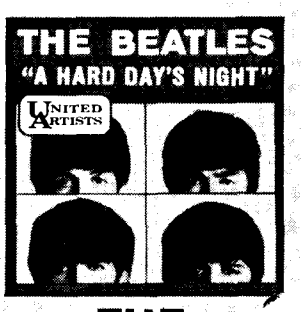
1351. Also: Dream, This Is All I Ask, Noelle, 12 in all



1390. Hitchhike, The Bird, Mama Didn't Know, 12 in all

1587. It's Gotta Be You, Leave Me Alone, Don't Call Me, 9 more

SPECIAL!



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1553. Here's the Beatles' biggest hit album . . . and you can begin your membership by purchasing it as your first selection. To receive it, just write the number "1553" in the "First Selection" box on the card, and fill in the numbers of the other six records you want free

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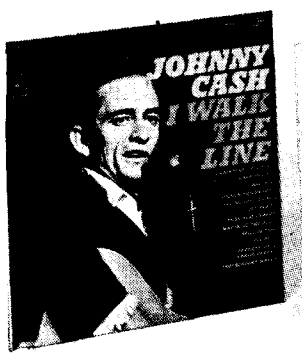
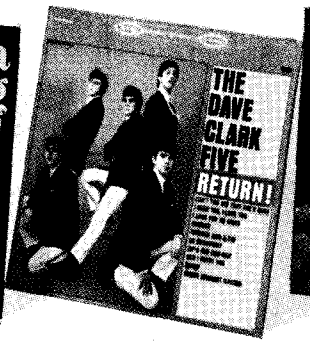


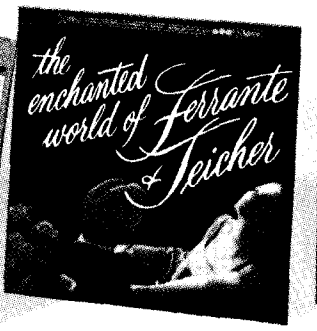
150. Johnny sings: Understand Your Man, Folsom Prison Blues, 12 in all

1301. Down with Love, Who Will Buy?, My Coloring Book, Gotta Move, 11 numbers

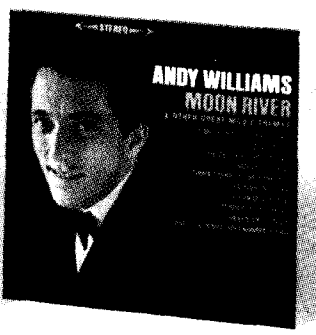
1612. Classic Sinatra: Let's Fall in Love, When I Take My Sugar to Tea, 12 in all



1583. Can't You See That She's Mine, On Broadway, Funny, 7 more *



1616. Scheherazade, Aloha Oe, Skater's Waltz, Mexican Hat Dance, 12 melodies



1001. Andy sings: Never on Sunday, Maria, Love Is A Many-Splendored Thing, etc.

...and it's our best offer ever!

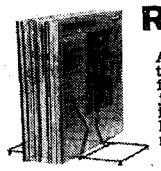
ANY 6

REGULAR or STEREO RECORDS

FREE

if you begin your membership by purchasing any one of these records, and agree to buy as few as six additional selections in the next 12 months, from the more than 1000 to be offered

PLUS THIS FREE GIFT
RECORD RACK



As our 10th Anniversary Gift to you, we'll include this brass-finished record rack *free*. Adjusts to your specific needs . . . its capacity grows as your collection grows. Folds flat when not in use.

Will hold one record or as many as sixty!

IT'S COLUMBIA RECORD CLUB'S 10th ANNIVERSARY and we're celebrating with our best offer ever! If you join now, you may have ANY SIX of the hit albums shown on these two pages — ALL SIX FREE! And as our Anniversary Gift to you, we'll include a record rack FREE!

Simply write in the numbers of the SIX RECORDS you wish to receive FREE on the postage-paid card provided. Then choose another record as your first selection, for which you will be billed only $3.98 (regular high-fidelity) or $4.98 (stereo). In short, you will actually receive seven records for the price of one!

Be sure to indicate whether you want your seven records (and all future selections) in regular high-fidelity or stereo. Also indicate the type of music in which you are mainly interested: Classical; Listening and Dancing; Broadway, Movies and Musical Comedies; Country and Western; Teen Hits; Jazz.

HOW THE CLUB OPERATES: Each month the Club's staff of music experts selects outstanding records from every field of music. These selections are fully described in the Club's entertaining and informative music Magazine, which you receive free each month.

You may accept the monthly selection for the field of music in which you are mainly interested, or take any of the wide variety of other records offered, or take NO record in any particular month.

Your only membership obligation is to purchase six additional records from the more than 1000 to be offered in the Club Magazine during the coming 12 months . . . and you may discontinue membership at any time thereafter. If you continue, you need buy only four records a year to remain a member in good standing.

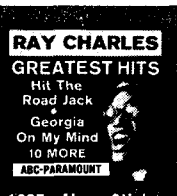
FREE RECORDS GIVEN REGULARLY. If you do wish to continue as a member after fulfilling your enrollment agreement, you will receive — FREE — a record of your choice for every two additional selections you buy.

The records you want are mailed and billed to you at the regular Club price of $3.98 (Classical $4.98; occasional Original Cast recordings and special albums somewhat higher), plus a small mailing and handling charge. Stereo records are $1.00 more. Mail the card today!

NOTE: Stereo records must be played only on a stereo record player.
* Records marked with a star (*) have been electronically re-channeled for stereo.

More than 1,500,000 families now belong to the world's largest record club

COLUMBIA RECORD CLUB • Terre Haute, Ind.



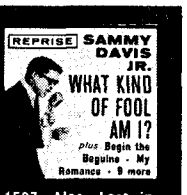
1327. Also: Sticks And Stones, One Mint Julep, etc.

1556. World's Fair, Unisphere, Iberia, Elementals, 2 more

1373. Also: I Can Dream, Can't I?; If; Trying; etc.

1614. Also: Forget Him, You Don't Own Him, Sugar Shack, etc.

1459. The Academy Award Winning score by John Addison

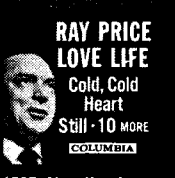


1537. Also: Lost in The Stars, Too Close for Comfort, etc.

1188. Also: I Wanna Be Loved, You Are The Only One, etc.

1003. Also: Volare, Around The World, Kansas City, etc.

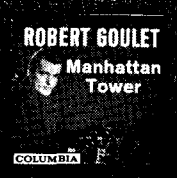
1098. "Fierce impact and momentum." — N.Y. World-Telegram



1597. Also: How Long Is Forever, Please Talk to My Heart, etc.

1610. Also: Crooked Little Man, Wives And Lovers, etc.

1598. Also: Cup of Loneliness, Color of The Blues, etc.



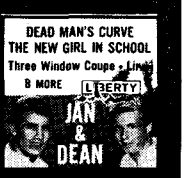
1593. Gordon Jenkins' musical poems in praise of Manhattan

1035. "Most lavish, beautiful musical; a triumph!" Kilgallen

1189. Also: Be My Guest, I've Been Around, etc.

1359. Standanavian, Rubberneck, Tootsie Roll, 9 in all

1607. Also: Drowsy Waters, The Hawaiian Wedding Song, etc.

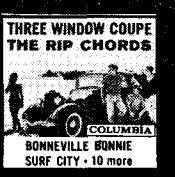


1571. Also: School Day, Hey Little Freshman, Bucket "T", etc.

1501. Eight spanking new explosions of laughter and song

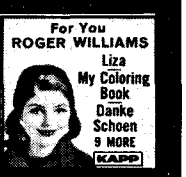
1545. Also: So Sad, Temptation, I'm Not Angry, Muskrat, etc.

1257. Also: Return to Paradise, Beyond The Reef, etc.

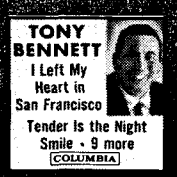


1613. Also: Hot Rod U.S.A., Surfin' Craze, etc.

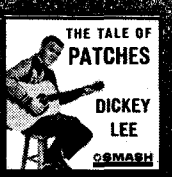
1090. "This is an extraordinary chorus." —New York Times



1354. Also: On The Trail, Janie Is Her Name, etc.



1023. Also: Love for Sale, Candy Kisses, Marry Young, etc.



1611. Travelin' Man, Devil Woman, Roses Are Red, etc.

1031. Complete score of the Rodgers and Hammerstein hit *

1580. Also: Thank You Mama, Thank You Papa; etc.

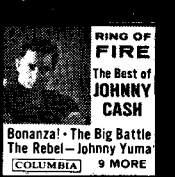
1258. Also: Midnight in Moscow, If I Had A Hammer, etc.

1582. Also: Cherry Stones, Saturday Night Out, etc.

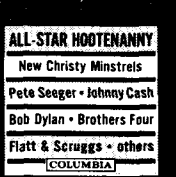
1015. Also: Go Away Little Girl, Up on the Roof, etc.

1584. Also: Fools Like Me, Your Cheating Heart, etc.

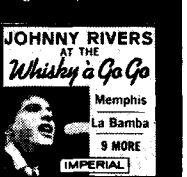
1130. Also: All The Love, Come Softly to Me, Hey Baby, etc.



1012. Also: What Do I Care, Forty Shades of Green, etc.



1317. Also: Carolyn Hester, Leon Bibb, Orriel Smith, etc.



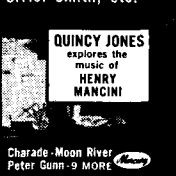
1519. Also: Twist And Shout, Walkin' The Dog, etc.

1013. Also: Twelfth of Never, No Love, Come to Me, etc. *

1410. Also: Someday My Prince Will Come, Hurdy-Gurdy Man, etc.

1605. America's most celebrated organist." — Newsweek

1442. The Sweetest Sounds, You'll Never Walk Alone, 10 more



1554. Also: Days of Wine And Roses, Pink Panther Theme, etc.

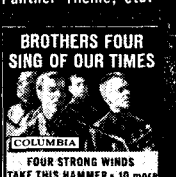
1448. Also: Sunshine Special, Goin' Home, Sinner Man, etc.

1163. Puff, The Magic Dragon; This Land Is Your Land; 10 more

1608. Also: The Blue Danube, Sabre Dance, Cielito Lindo, etc.

1581. Also: Mama Said, You Don't Own Me, etc. *

1595. Also: Because of You, All The Way, Secret Love, etc.



1589. Also: Ballad of Moreton Bay, Beans Taste Fine, etc.

1444. Also: All The Time, Stay, No Time to Lose, etc. *

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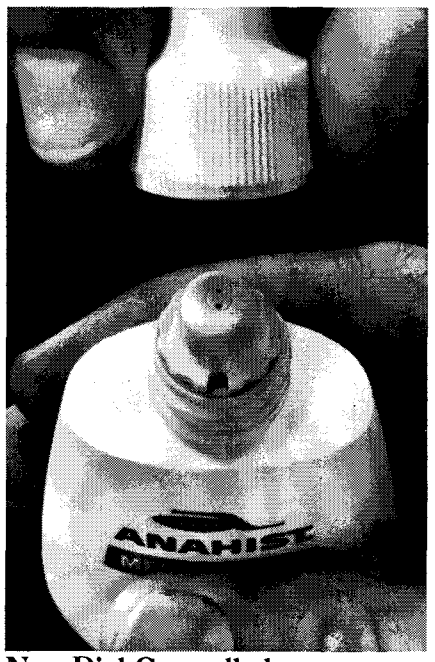
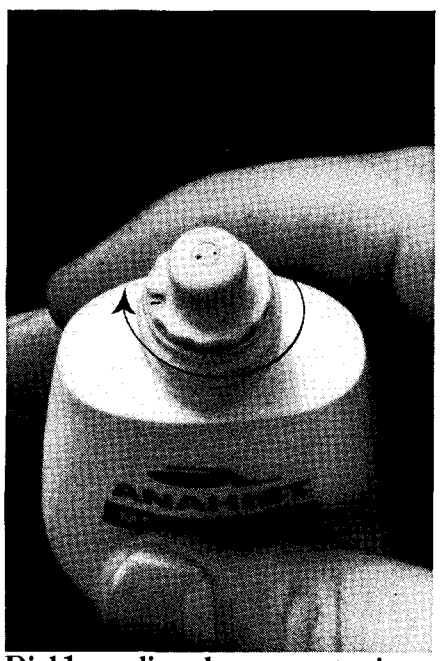
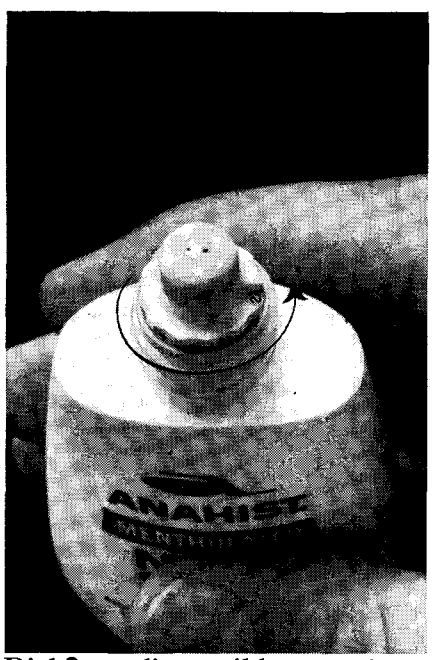
Announcing a new Anahist Dial-Controlled nasal spray you can adjust to suit the degree of congestion!



New Dial Controlled



Dial 1 to relieve heavy congestion

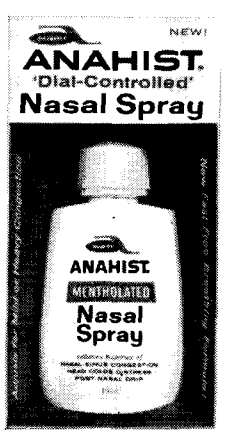


Dial 2 to relieve mild congestion

When your nose is so stopped up you feel you can't breathe, you need this special kind of relief. New Anahist Dial-Controlled Nasal Spray—the only spray that lets you choose the relief you require.

When congestion is heavy, Dial 1 and squeeze. A heavy flow of penetrating droplets starts to spread relief instantly. When congestion is mild, or tapering off, Dial 2 and get a fine mist of soothing medication.

New Anahist's clinical-strength formula combines a decongestant, an antihistamine, an antimicrobial, a mucolytic, plus an essential penetrating menthol ingredient. Helps keep you breathing free and relieves for hours on end.



Another Clinical-Strength Medication from Warner-Lambert Pharmaceutical Co.

But when their children do something childish, they don't always reason with us. Sometimes they spank us. Parents don't know their own minds.

When parents don't get their way, they have temper tantrums. Our mother yells her head off. But our father sulks.

Parents have too much freedom these days. They are always thinking of ways to get away from us. When our mother goes on a business trip with our father, why do they always take their bathing suits? Sometimes we're afraid we spoil parents by letting them have their way.

Parents don't seem to realize that they have lots of bad habits. We think there's nothing wrong with a mother expecting a father to clean up his room before he goes out to play tennis with the boys. His newspapers and ashes are all over the place. Sometimes we think he really expects mother to be his servant, picking up after him all the time. We're afraid our father is going to turn into a slob unless he mends his ways.

We don't know where our parents picked up all their bad habits. Certainly not from us. It's probably their friends. We don't approve of their friends. They wear too much makeup and they drink. Our mother's friends also spend all their time on the telephone. Whenever we need her, she's busy talking to someone. A parent should face her responsibilities.

Our mother has another bad habit. She doesn't know the value of money. If she knew how hard our father worked for his money, she wouldn't spend it like water.

Parents don't take care of their belongings. You should see how dirty our family car is. And they lose interest in things easily. Our mother wanted to redecorate our living room for a long time. And now she wants to do it again.

After supper, parents watch trash on TV. When our parents are not looking at old movies, they are watching programs which glorify violence. (Maybe that's where they learn to hit us so much.) The programs they like best are the ones they say are bad for us.

Parents today also frighten easily. They're afraid to watch the monster programs we love.

Parents don't read as much as they used to, either. And when they do, it's always the same old junk. They know baseball players' batting averages and all about the lives of movie stars. But how often do we see them picking up a good book about arithmetic or geography? No wonder they always say they don't understand the new math.

Sometimes we lie in bed at night unable to fall asleep because we are worrying about what will become of our parents. This makes us thirsty and we have to ask for glasses of water. But our parents think we do it just to annoy them.

In spite of the way they're always taking advantage of us and never leave us alone for a minute with all their demands, parents have their good points. Every now and then our parents say bright things, which we can repeat to our friends, and we all have a good laugh.

We hope our parents will be a great comfort in our old age.

Jamie L. Kitman sort KITMAN

Footnote: Some of the things our children say about us are bright, but they are all lies. We promised them immunity for a forthright presentation of their views. In our house we teach the Bill of Rights. As soon as we saw what they really thought of us, however, we sent them to bed without supper.

Carol and Marvin Kitman

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Now see superb color in sharp focus. Get brighter, clearer color reception, even in fringe areas. Philco just doubled the picture-pulling power of its Color TV. The result: new 20/20 Color Vision—color rivaled only by nature.

Color TV just took a giant step. It's called Philco 20/20 Color Vision. It gives you color the way color should be—bright, sharp and natural. Color that stays true because Philco's Automatic Picture Pilot electronically checks the picture over 15,000 times a second—doesn't let color wash out or turn garish. And the Philco ColorClear Tuner and Power-Plus Chassis double the sensitivity of Philco Color TV. You get brilliant reception even in outlying areas. Make this your year for extra fun. See Color TV by Philco, the people who developed basic circuitry for compatible color years ago.

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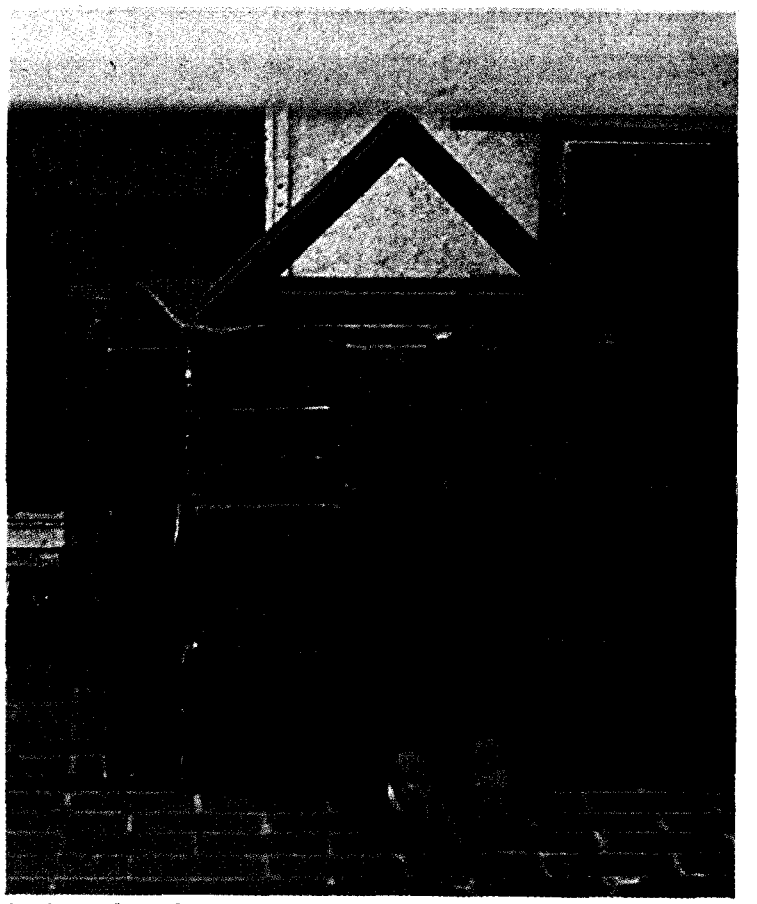
POST

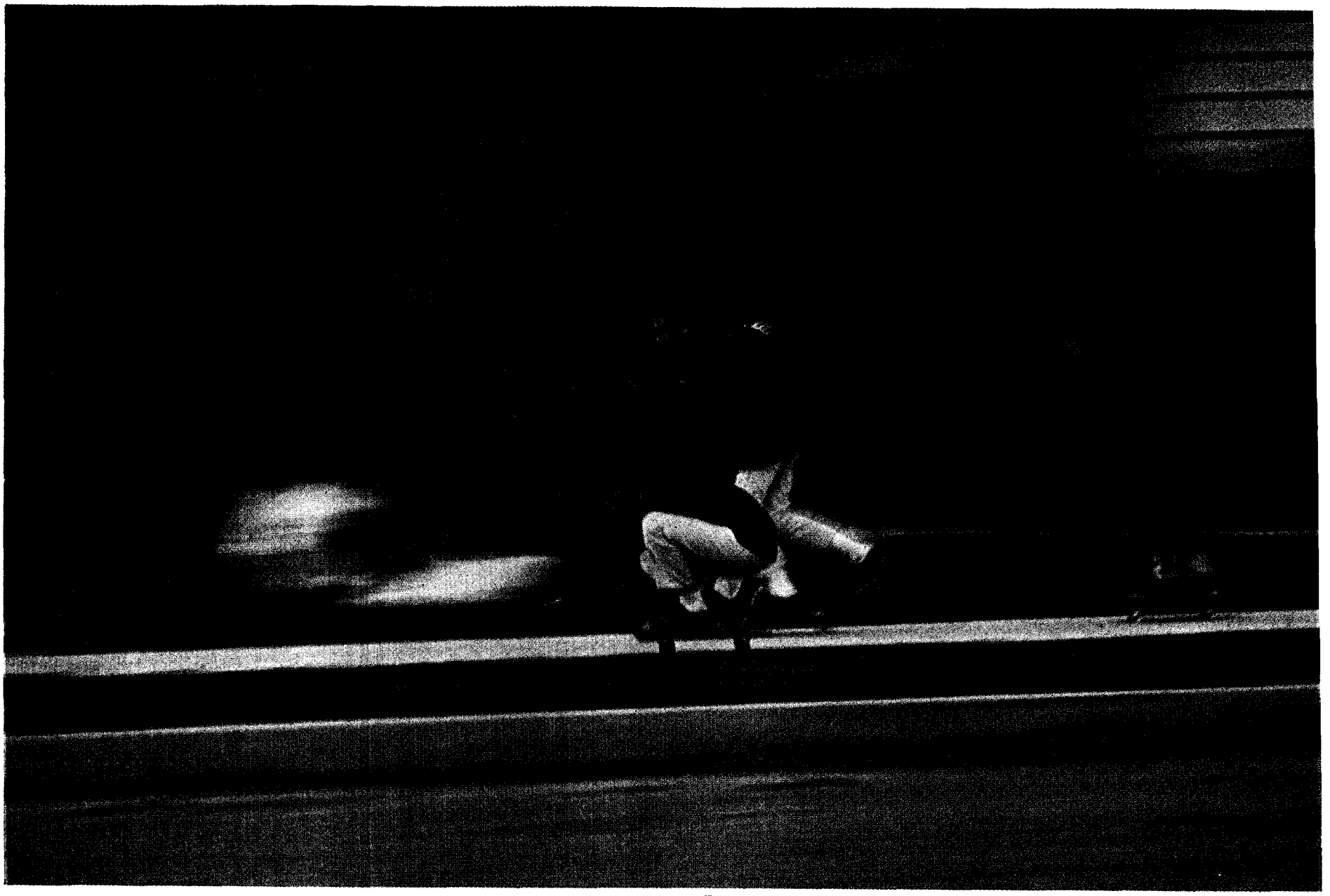
By Sandford Brown

The world of play

London Bridge is still falling down, my fair lady—a minstrel's tale passed on by yesterday's children. To an adult grown old and reflective, it is apt to sound vaguely sad, like a theme from a movie that touched him long ago. Childhood, after all, cannot really be recalled except in fleeting ways, through a snatch of tune, or the smell of a freshly waxed school corridor which awakens some wordless memory. The taste of a Tootsie Roll can do it, if it's been something like 20 years since the last Tootsie Roll. A few intimations are all we can have of something that must surely have been very vivid, and so the small sense of great loss.



In the rooftop playground at New York City's Dalton School, colored wood crates serve as building blocks for girlhood's basic game, "House."



PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE J. SCHILLER

Trees and houses are a dizzy blur to skateboarders racing down a Van Nuys, Calif., sidewalk. Racers turn by leaning, stop by jumping off.

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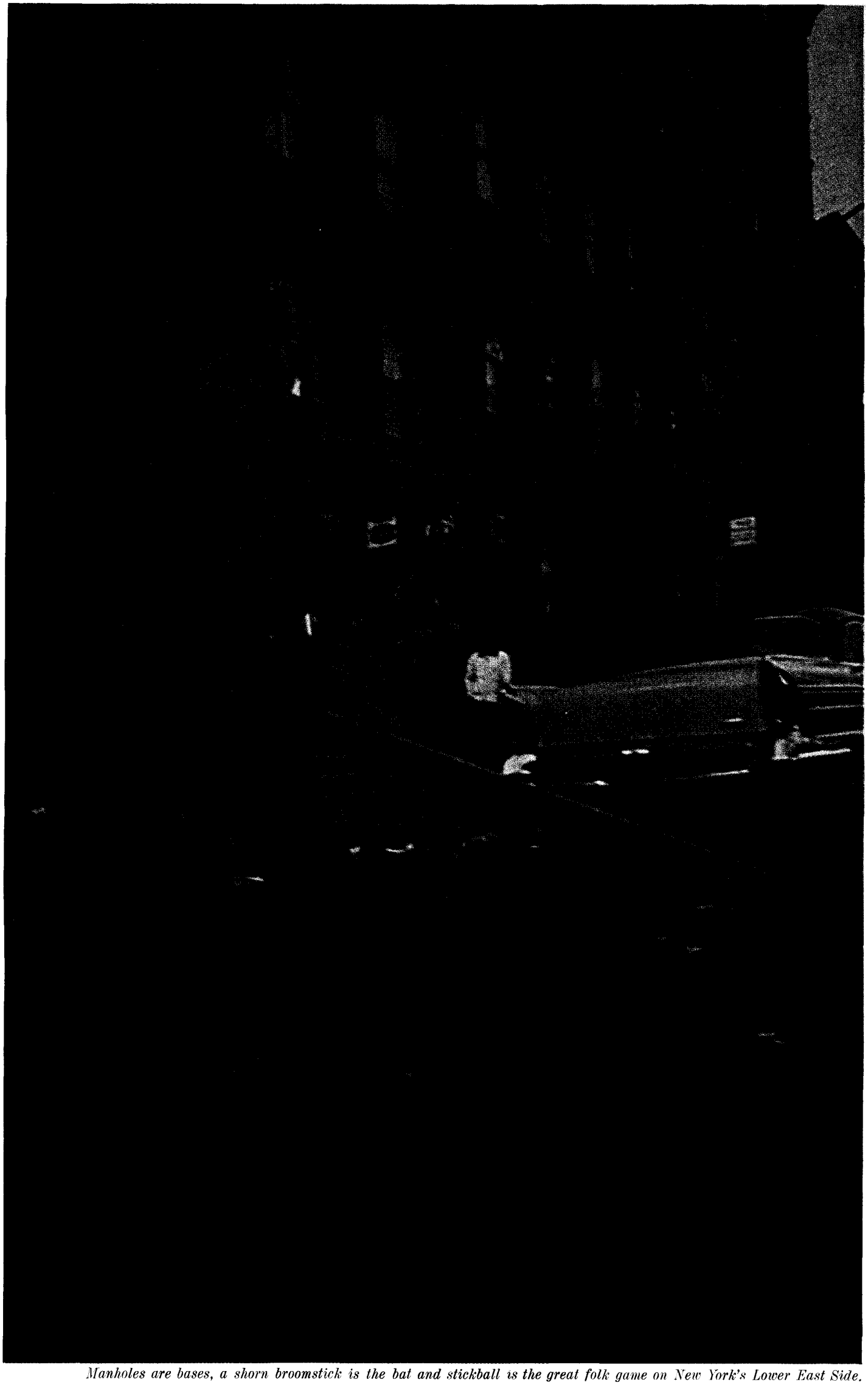

Manholes are bases, a shorn broomstick is the bat and stickball is the great folk game on New York's Lower East Side.

But what is it we have forgotten? And was childhood ever as good as it somehow seems to have been?

It was a time when we had an almost infinite capacity to relish experience—"sweet childish days that were as long as twenty days are now." There are some, and Wordsworth was one, who see childhood as a transcendental state in which we are close to God and nature, as we can never be again. Child psychologists say they get something of the same feeling when they study the psyches of the very young—a sense of drawing near to the secrets of life itself. It was a time of simplicity, and freedom, before our minds were programmed with the assortment of strictures, practical considerations and illusory anxieties that make all adults captives of their own built-in computers. Even childhood corroded by domestic disaster, even "underprivileged" childhood spent in filthy streets, must have something of that quality. There is beauty in it, as much as nostalgia can later imagine.

No one can say precisely when it begins or when it begins to end. It probably starts with play, when the infant in his second year begins to contemplate seriously the possibilities of his toys. From then on, play is his preoccupation, his self-expression, and the central thread of his life, until the fateful moment years later when he feels the first twinges of embarrassment about "acting his age."

"What do you mean, what do I play?" says a boy in suburban New Jersey when asked about his favorite games. "I don't play anything. I'm not a kid!"

He is only 10, but in a sad way he is right. Some kids stay kids until they're as old as 12, when a boy may have his Terrific Twelve party complete with Post Office, Spin the Bottle and Lights Out. And suddenly the social pressure, the sex drive, or whatever, has got him, and it's too late; he can no longer spend a happy solitary hour watching a frog or just messing around with a ball and a wall.

The true games of childhood are the unfettered, almost unconscious ones, and there is an astonishing continuity about them—as though some invisible grapevine transmitted ideas and verses and rules from one generation of children to the next. Music for jumping rope persists without the aid of the record companies—"Bluebells, cockleshells, evie, ivy, over," "Cinderella, dressed in yella, went upstairs to kiss her fella, how many kisses did he get, 1–2–3–4–5 . . ." and a hundred other versions. Hopscotch (pottsie) courts were drawn on the cobbles of ancient Rome, and the very names of such games as King of the Mountain and mumblety-peg can be traced into the mists of medieval Europe. There are infinite varieties of the eternal, basic games of "house," games of "pursuit" (like hide-and-seek), and games of more or less violent competition.

If there is a hierarchy of boyhood games, No. 1 could be the violent, quasi-military pastime commonly known as "capture the flag," in which two teams defend adjoining territories, seize enemy prisoners and attack the enemy flag under a variety of rules. The game is at its best where there are trees and bushes for camouflage. In city streets, however, stickball is king, requiring only a broomstick and a "spaldeen" (a red rubber ball made by the A.G. Spalding Co.). Manholes serve as home plate and second base, with first and third scratched on the curb; the ball is pitched on one bounce, and a mighty belt will travel as far as four sewers.

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Another urban adaptation is the game of hide-and-seek as played in New York's Greenwich Village. While the fellow who is "it" counts "90–95–100 ready or not," the other players hide by mingling with the sidewalk crowds—in the "Village Game," you can only hide behind people.

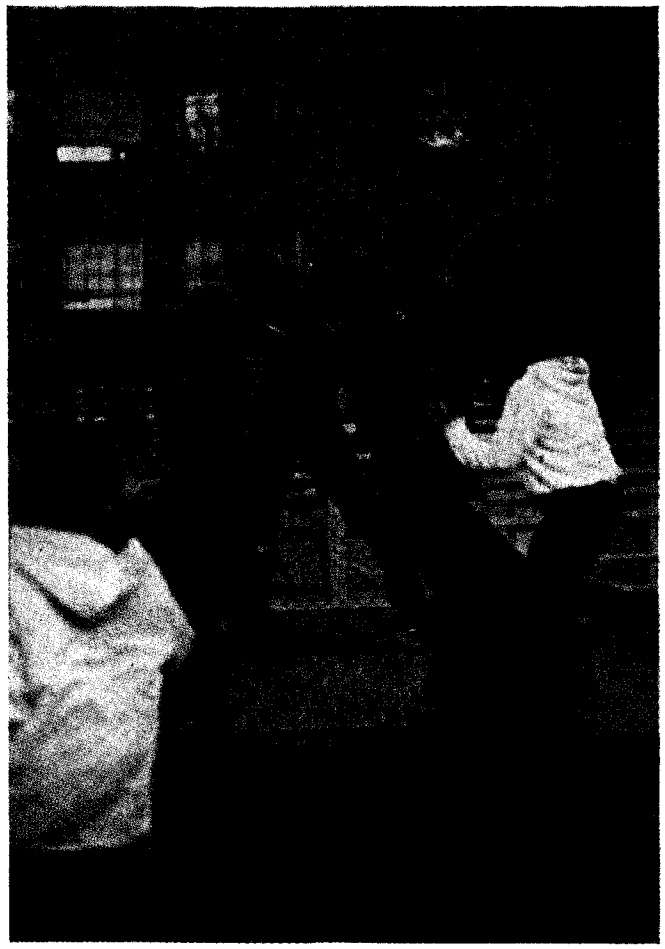
Child experts are constantly classifying and interpreting games. They classify stickball, for example, as partly a "folk game" (with no set rules), and partly a sport (baseball). When children play Monopoly, they are playing a board game, but when they use the Monopoly money to play "store" (a variation of "house"), they are playing a folk game.

The same experts who see children as creatures of nature also see them mimicking adults and even acting out "adult" aggressions and sex drives. Thus, the rough-and-tumble on the lawn is the first step up life's competitive ladder, and playing house is the first step to the real thing. Yet psychologists might have a hard time explaining a four-year-old in Kansas City who is always suggesting a game to his six-year-old sister and eight-year-old brother by saying, "You be the Mommy, you be the Daddy and I'll be the dog." His parents explain that it's much more interesting that way, because he can get down on his knees, bark, roll over and bite.

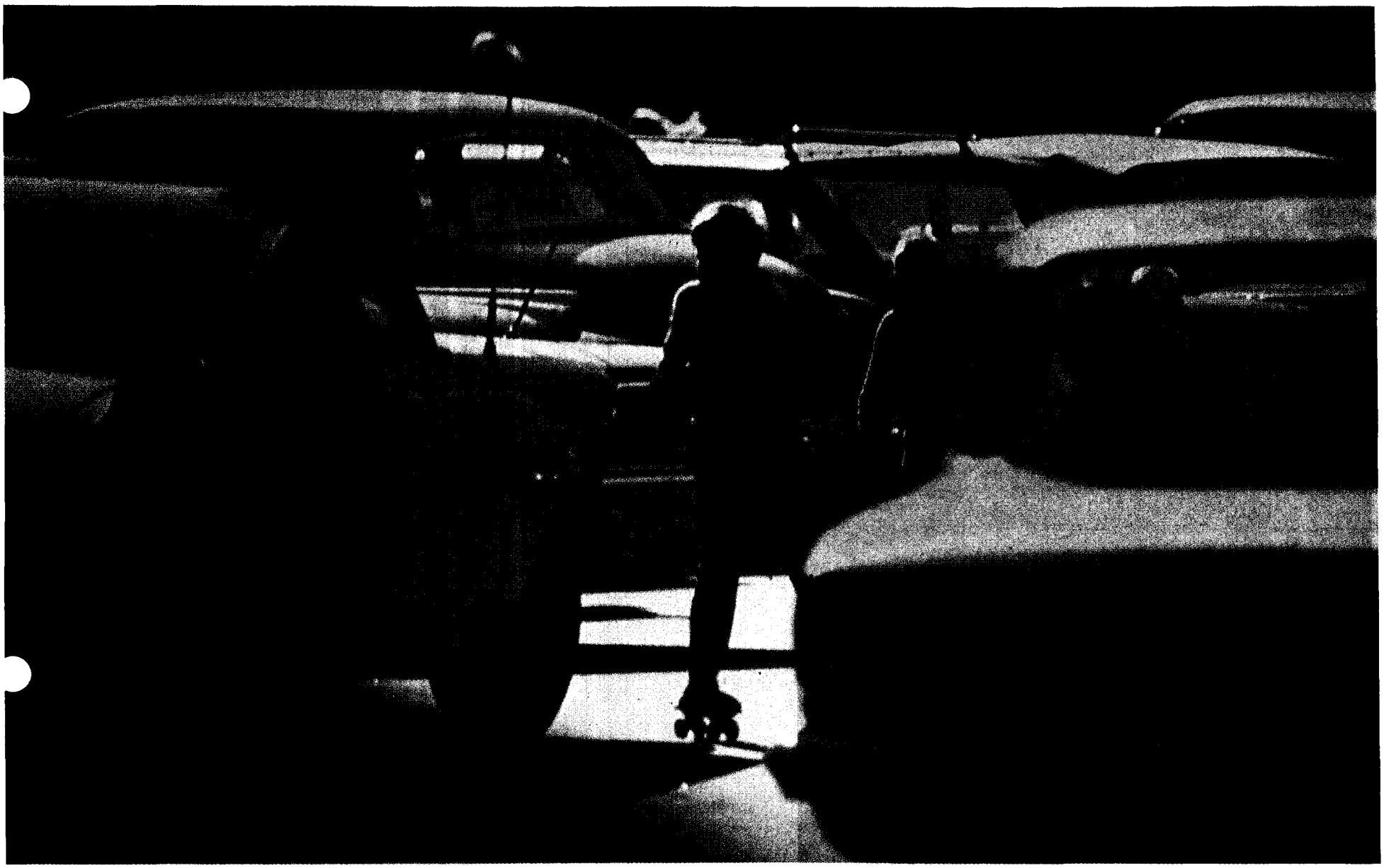
Whatever the case, it is clear that the infinite variations in basic games reflect the adult world, and the adult world of the moment. In Dallas, for example,

"Steal the bacon" players try to grab the can and get away.

A city version of hide-and-seek uses people for concealment.



King of the Mountain on a concrete "hill" in Harlem playground.



Playable streets, like vacant lots, are getting scarce. These hockey players pursue the ball amid moving New York traffic.

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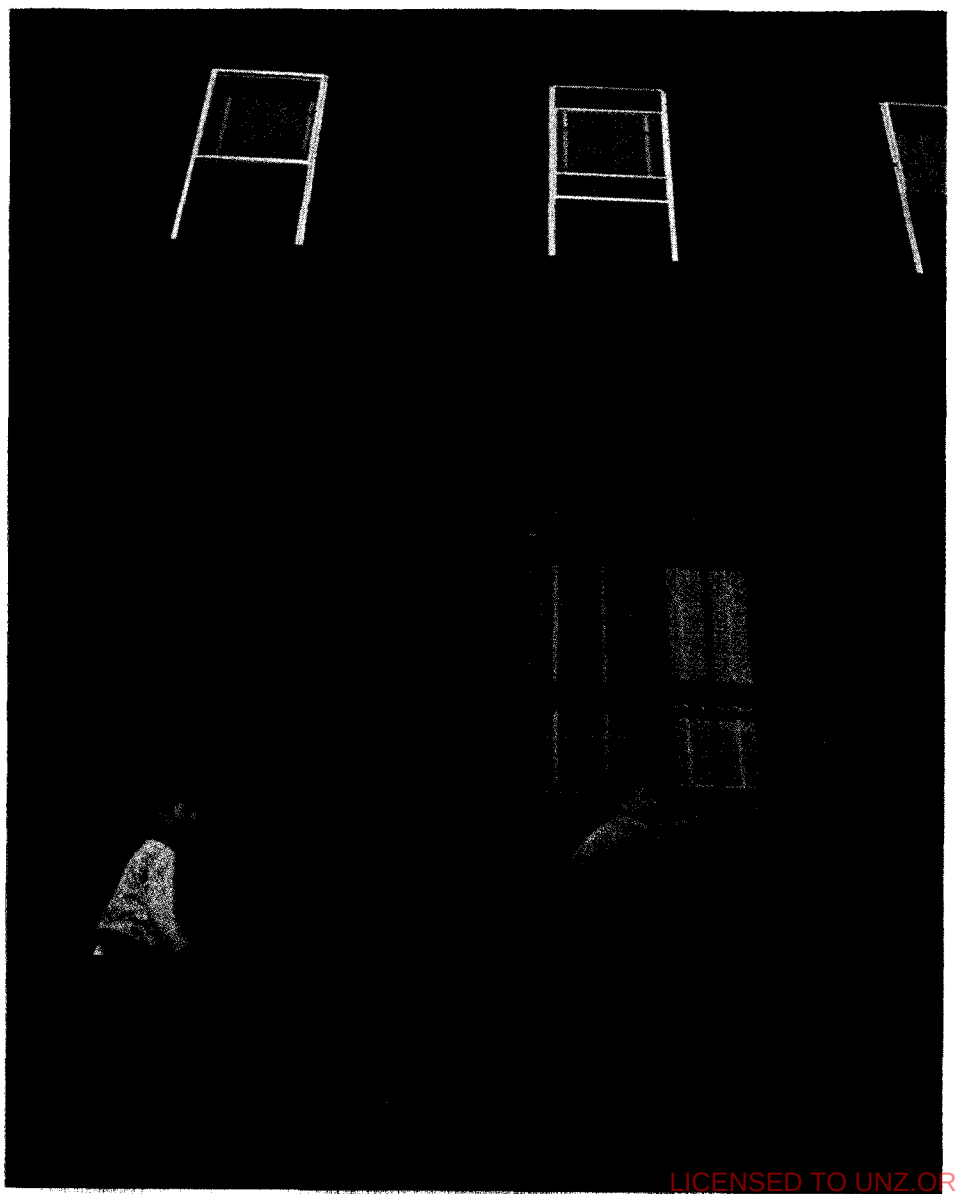
The sheer delight of a swing is good in solitary moments, even better at sociable get-togethers.



In the spell of play, time and place are forgotten. The handball bouncing off the brick wall and the fantasies it inspires are all that matter and all that the players need to fill a long afternoon.

an observer recently noted a topical twist on the basic game of "war" or "cowboys and Indians." An eight-year-old boy with a green beret led a file toward the wooded hiding place of another gang whose faces were rubbed with yellow dirt.

"Come on, Yank," shouted a voice from the trees. "Come and get it!"

"Let's get them lousy Commies!" called the leader in the beret.

When the Yanks caught a Commie, they performed some mock torture and shot him down with their plastic rifle As he lay screaming for mercy, the beret walked over and placed his rifle at the base of the captive's head and fired. The name of the game is "Vietnam."

In San Francisco the kids have a new game with a toy rifle and a toy wagon. The rifleman shoots his cap gun, the victim in the go-cart falls "dead," and everyone else chases the rifleman, often for blocks, pummeling him when they catch him. The name of this game is "Assassination," and a touring Moscow poet who witnessed it was so struck by the phenomenon that he wrote a poem about it in a Russian literary magazine.

The current variations don't really matter, of course. What really worries a lot of parents is the suspicion that the world we live in is somehow changing the nature of childhood itself, distorting and shortening the age of innocence.

There is television, of course, with the instant, prepackaged excitement that may numb children to the simple, delicate pleasures only a child can savor. There is the basic matter of population growth and urbanization, converting the vacant lots and briar patches of remembered childhoods into concrete parking lots and tiny patches of lawn where no child can find escape. The ol' swimmin' holes and the trees that used to hold tree huts are going, and the city streets themselves seem less playable than in the past; heavy traffic has driven stickball itself from many urban neighborhoods.

Even affluence may be wreaking harm. There was a time when wadding up an old newspaper to create a "football" was as much fun as playing with it. Now the "real thing" is everywhere sold, a shower of breakable, replaceable gimcracks that substitute a sheet of instructions for a child's imagination. Children have become a Market—often referred to as the "subteens" by people who apparently see them mainly as avid little consumers and can't wait for them to become bigger, teen-age consumers.

Yet there have been apparent gains, as well. Teachers, guided by the psychologists, have developed a new respect for the child's ability to learn. Where they once considered the child as an empty vessel to be stuffed with facts, they now see themselves in the role of guides into a new world of learning, where each child at his own pace can satisfy his own inborn hunger for knowledge.

And parents, too, are more aware. In an earlier America youngsters in the middle years of childhood too often were seen but not heard in more than manner; their needs were secondary, and when domestic adjustments had to be made, it was the child who had to make them.

No grown-up can know for sure what is being lost or gained, because no grown-up can remember. But then we have only to wait a few years, and they won't remember either, even when they hear their children singing "London Bridge is Falling Down." THE END

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The inside of a crate is dark and smells like wood, reason enough for climbing up to stick one's head in. It is also a house, with more of the true essence of houseness than any real one has.

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The three R's+discipline+old-fashioned teachers=THE EXTRAORDINARY AMIDON SCHOOL

By NORMAND POIRIER

The first-grade classroom buzzed with excitement. Something wonderful was about to happen, and the six-year-old boys and girls could not wait to find out what it was. They wiggled in their seats, whispered to one another, craned their necks for a peek at the chart that the teacher blocked from view. They could hear her scissors snipping away and knew that the great event was coming closer. Suddenly a tow-headed boy with a missing tooth and flaming red tie jumped up and blurted out, "I know what it is, Mrs. Mullen!"

The teacher finished snipping, looked around, then stepped away from the chart. The room exploded with laughter. Some clapped, some did nervous little dances, others just stared at the chart. There, plainly revealed for all to see, was the magnificent letter *W*.

It's been a long time in American public-school education since the letter *W*—or any other letter—has been as exciting to youngsters as a toy under the Christmas tree. Children still are taught their alphabet these days. But most schools combine phonics—the sounds of individual letters—with the see-and-say method whereby youngsters learn whole words as pictures, the way Chinese children learn characters. Pure phonics, the technique that Mrs. Mullen uses, fell into disrepute 30 years ago and never has fully regained its old status.

But there's more to the excitement in this first-grade class than just the way Mrs. Mullen teaches reading. In this particular school—the Margaret M. Amidon, one of 135 public grade schools in Washington, D.C.—the same exuberance and vitality can be observed during a sixth-grade discussion of the electoral college, a third-grade Spanish-vocabulary review or a second-grade exercise in number concepts. Because these children are successfully taught how to read at an early age, their teachers can and do challenge their minds with difficult material in other subjects. The teaching is "old-fashioned"—and strict. In turn Amidon's children respond to the challenge and seem to enjoy learning. They sulk if parents keep them home with sniffles, and they even prefer homework to television.

The children's enthusiasm is matched by that of their parents. As a result, many of these parents are bucking a nationwide trend: the flight of white families from urban school districts heavily populated with Negroes. Amidon's enrollment of 805 is 70 percent Negro, slightly less than Washington's overall Negro school population of 86 percent. And in "integrated" Washington, schools still tend to be either almost all white or almost all Negro; Amidon is an exception.

Some 200 Amidon students are children of professional men and civil servants who live in nearby town houses and luxury apartments. This minority is mixed in with 300 youngsters from two military installations and a neighborhood public-housing project where the average family income is $2,600. The remaining 300 students come from all over Washington and are admitted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Amidon's reputation has grown to almost cult level in the four years since the program was launched. The school always has a waiting list of hundreds. White parents have transferred children out of 98-percent-white public schools and expensive all-white private schools at the first vacancy. Busing from five miles is not unusual. One little girl comes from nearby Maryland as a $318-a-year tuition pupil. A doctor's son was hopefully enrolled on his first birthday, and an engineer's wife moving her family from Texas to Washington wrote to a real-estate firm that she wanted a home "near the Amidon school, wherever that is."

Equally impressive is the effect the school's reputation has had on attracting

Taught by phonics, this Amidon five-year-old is already learning to read.

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prospective tenants to the nearby luxury apartments and town houses. "We have Amidon all over our brochures," says Jerald Deem, property-management man for a real-estate firm that sells and rents the dwellings. "A lot of people come to us because they know the school is here."

Amidon is the brainchild of balding, soft-spoken Carl F. Hansen, superintendent of Washington's schools since 1958. He launched the new school in 1960 and was so pleased with the results that two years later he began instituting the "Amidon plan" throughout the city's grade schools. Despite the plan's proven success, it has met some stiff opposition. "I'm a creative teacher!" snapped one of the two teachers who quit rather than teach reading by the phonics method.

Doctor Hansen believes that some teachers and administrators are opposed to the program because they do not understand it, or are too rigid to accept it. He admits that some interpret it as simply a return to the outmoded teaching methods of a generation or more ago. But their objections are not going to stop him. If Hansen has his way, all Washington youngsters will be learning according to his plan, and he is convinced this will result in a marked improvement in the entire school system.

As proof, he points to Jefferson Junior High, where Amidon graduates go. "We're no longer spending our first year doing the remedial work that should have been done in grade school," said Jefferson's principal, Elizabeth C. Jamieson. "They're coming in, eager, with good work habits, and we're taking right off."

School officials give credit for this rare interest in elementary-level scholarship to four things: a curriculum built around phonics; the challenging of children with more work at an earlier age; highly organized, direct teaching by enthusiastic teachers; and a disciplined, strictly business approach to learning.

Instruction at Amidon begins in kindergarten with phonics and the simpler "new-math" concepts. From the first grade on, there is heavy stress on formal, basic subjects—spelling, reading, handwriting, math, speech and literature. Grammar, normally taught in sixth grade, is introduced in third grade along with French and Spanish. History and geography, no longer grouped as "social studies," are taught a year earlier than usual. Frills have been eliminated. There are no Halloween parties, no jelly-making classes, no school orchestra or choral group, no student government, no sightseeing tours. Field trips must be relevant to work in class, such as visits to art and science museums. In sixth grade as in kindergarten, the teacher is unabashedly a symbol of authority: no chatting, no strolling across the room without permission, no idle window gazing.

Far from collapsing under Amidon's stepped-up program, says the principal, Dr. Dorothy Johnson, children learn more, earlier and faster "than even we thought possible." Kindergarteners not only master 21 consonant sounds with ease but outrun their curriculum by spelling out and pronouncing words wherever they find them—on corridor walls, bulletin boards, on signs to and from school. First-graders wade through long words like "information" and "anniversary" on their own. Many second-graders breeze through fourth- and fifth-grade reading materials. In year-end achievement tests, officials say, Amidon pupils regularly score well above national norms—three and four grades above, in some cases—and always score higher than their own ability charts indicate they should.

"But more important," Doctor Johnson says, "they're delighted by the demands made on them. Children *want* to learn. If they're treated maturely, they respond maturely. And they're very proud of accomplishing."

Superintendent Hansen, who had been thinking about this program for a number of years, finally found the opportunity he had been looking for in 1960. A new $700,000, 26-room school had just been completed as part of an extensive land-redevelopment project in the old Southwest section of Washington. But construction was slow on the apartment buildings that were to provide the school with much of its enrollment, and Hansen suddenly discovered he had a brand-new school which was only about one third full. Through the press he announced the kind of basic-education school program he had long envisaged and invited applications from interested parents. Within a week he had received 400 letters. Amidon opened that September.

Hansen's plan grew out of what he had observed as superintendent and before that as head of Washington's primary and then secondary schools. He had become increasingly appalled at teaching methods that left an estimated two thirds of the city's children from one to four grades below their proper class levels in reading and arithmetic. When he asked why this sorry record could not be improved, he kept getting the same answer from the teachers: The pupils were already achieving to capacity. He decided to find out for himself.

After visiting numerous classes, he concluded that a great many pupils weren't learning simply because their teachers weren't teaching them. He found second-graders making chocolate pudding, fourth-graders learning how to shine shoes and fifth-graders visiting a supermarket to buy a week's imaginary groceries.

The instructors, Hansen discovered, were often allowed to teach whatever subjects they wanted, and whenever they felt like it. He said he met teachers who told him they didn't think arithmetic was particularly important, and others who insisted that it was wrong to force a child to learn until he was ready.

To Hansen, this represented a dangerous deterioration of much of the school system. The Amidon school is the most dramatic example of what he thinks he can do to reform this system. And, as Amidon is his showcase, it is here that the most pointed attacks are leveled. Some critics charge that Amidon has been successful because parents who bus or drive children from all over the district will take a greater interest in their children's schoolwork. They also argue that teachers selected for a publicized pilot program will try harder for results.

Hansen replies that many parents who applied from beyond Amidon boundaries did so because their children were not doing well in the schools they were attending. Thus Amidon was importing many pupils with emotional and learning problems, along with the strongly motivated.

As for high teacher-motivation, Doctor Johnson, who was Amidon's principal from the start, concedes that the school's first 16 teachers—eight white and eight Negro—were eager about the project. "But the real enthusiasm developed after they saw that the idea worked," she says. "The enthusiasm resulted from success, not the reverse."

Most parents seem to be pleased with the school's old-fashioned methods and concepts. Mrs. George Stoertz, a Smithsonian oceanographer who has four children at Amidon, put it this way: "I went to a progressive school myself, and I still can't do arithmetic. You ought to hear my kids! And I like the idea of discipline—the place to let children go is at home, not at school." Navy chaplain Earl W. Fedje, asked whether Amidon is pushing his third-grader too fast, said, "She pushes me to the library every week, religiously, for books she hasn't even been assigned to read."

Now that Amidon is guaranteed a steady population from its own area, it is going to stop accepting pupils outside its designated boundaries. But this will be the only change. Most important, the school will still have teachers like Mrs. Almareta Mullen, who was there at the beginning and who still gets excited when she arrives in the morning.

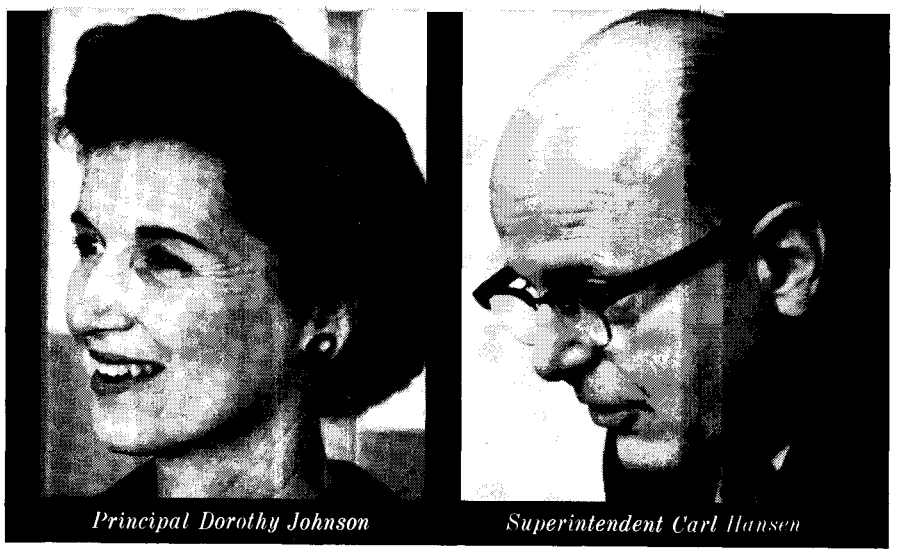
And Mrs. Mullen will continue to teach the letter *W*. "Do we all know his name?" she asks. Thirty-one hands vie for teacher's nod. "Do we all know some words that begin with the *wuh* sound?"

They stand up one after the other—"*wagon, winter, wool, with, want, wood*. . . ."

"My! You're smart children!" Mrs. Mullen says. "How do you *know* so much?"

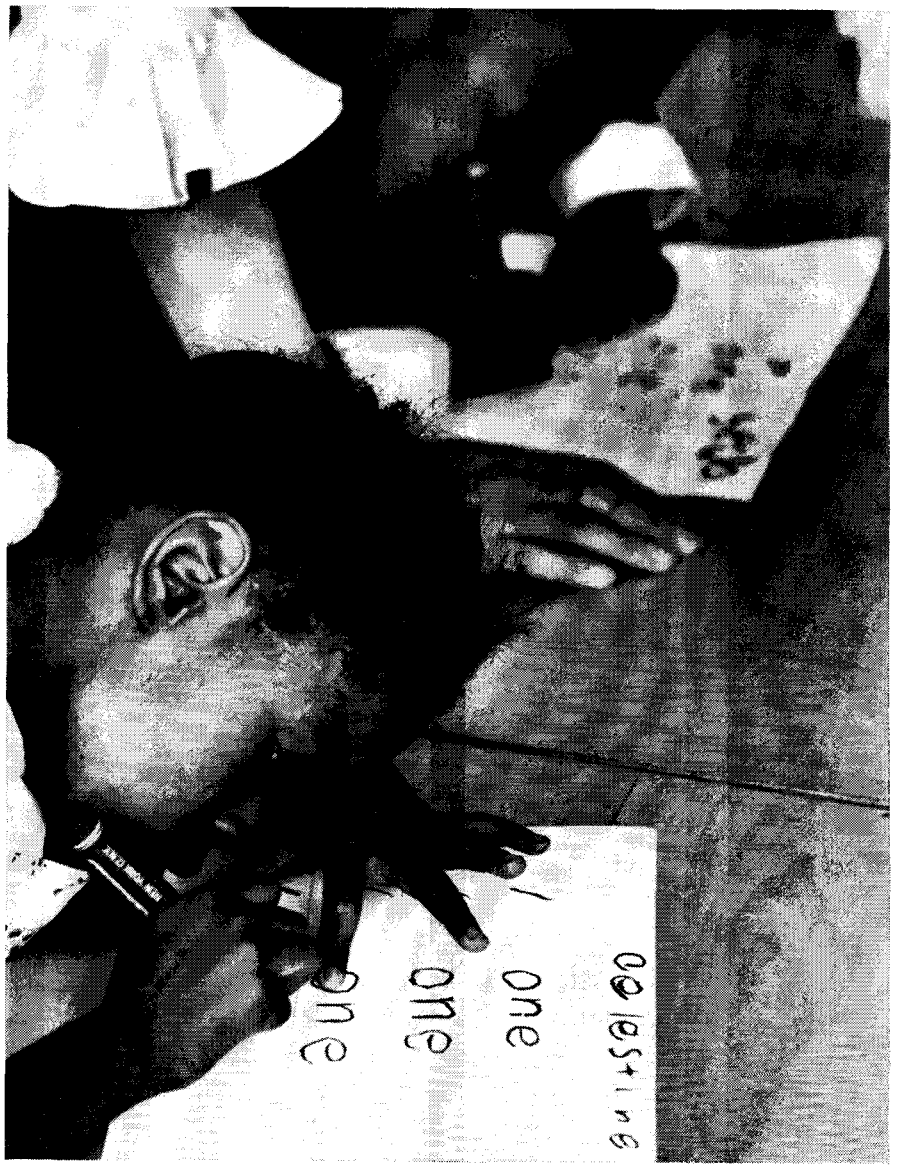
"From kindergarten," the children answer in a happy sing-song.

"That's right, children," says Mrs. Mullen, "and now we'll interrupt our class to go outside, because it's play time." The whole class groans in disappointment. Never, in the long history of pedagogy, has the humble letter *W* been paid a finer tribute. THE END



Principal Dorothy Johnson *Superintendent Carl Hansen*

A six-year-old traces "one" and learns to relate three things: word, numeral and idea.



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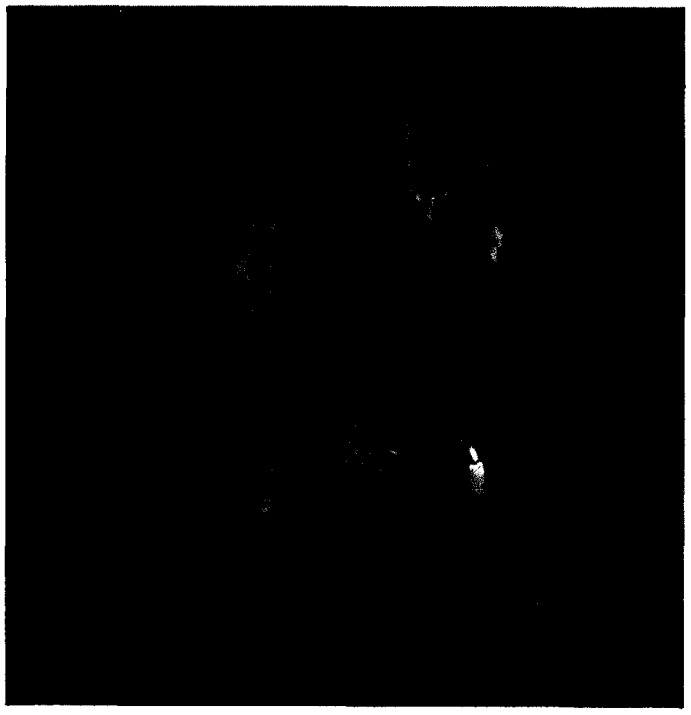
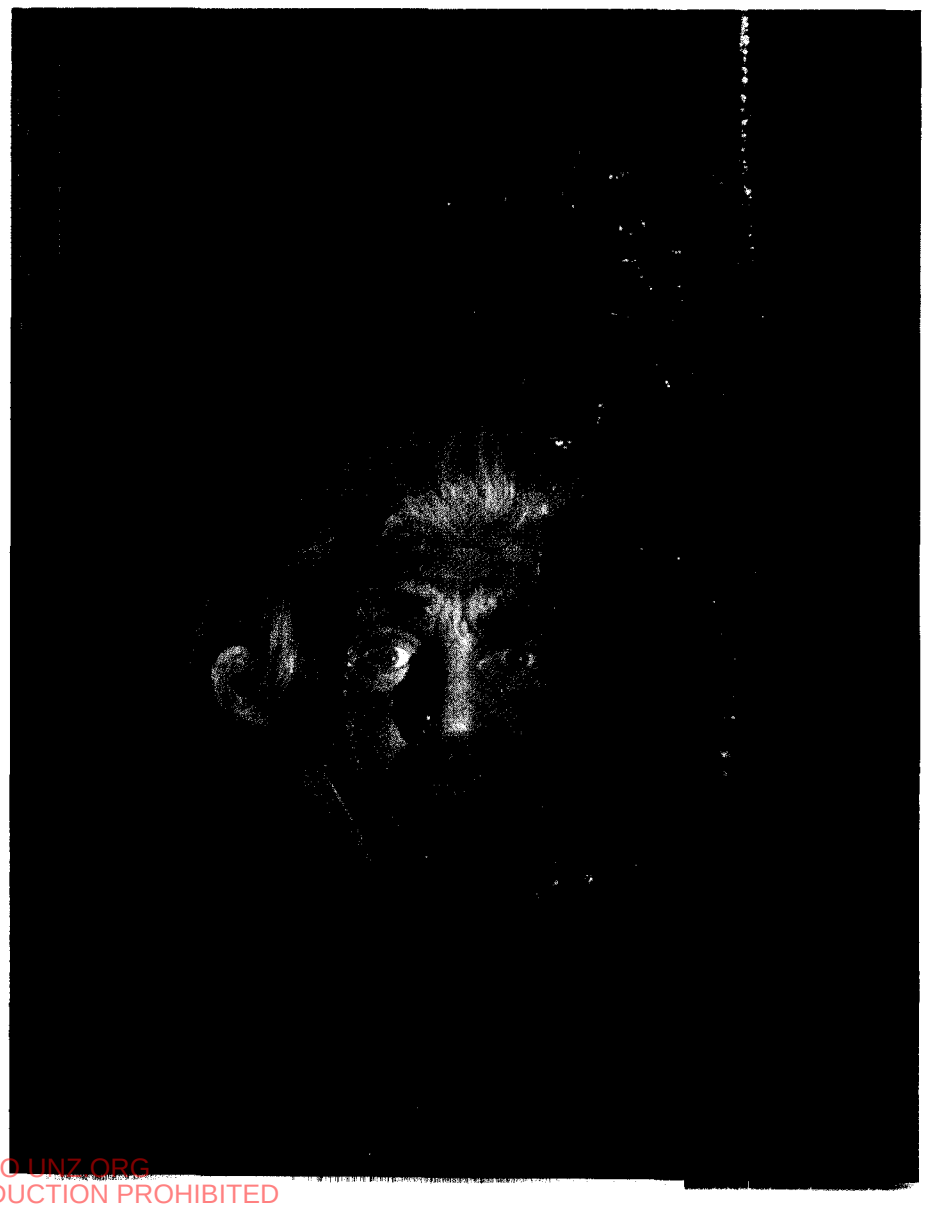
"God bless us, every one!"

Photographs by Mark Kauffman

Improbable as it may sound, Charles Dickens chuckled when he first conceived the character Scrooge, and he laughed for days over the Three Ghosts and Tim, the Tiny Cripple. But from these curious elements the master storyteller fashioned a sentimental Christmas story that has endured for 121 years. In 1843, *A Christmas Carol* meant more than just a good story to Dickens; it was a matter of survival for himself and his seven dependents. England was in a severe economic depression, and although the 31-year-old Dickens was world-famous, he was as poor as Bob Cratchit. He had to have an immediate best seller. Six days before Christmas his story about the reformation of a crabbed, elderly pinchpenny appeared and promptly sold out the first edition of 6,000 copies in one day. The Dickens family was saved. On the following pages the editors of *The Saturday Evening Post* present an original photographic version of the tale of the miser who learned that Christmas was not "humbug." This production, photographed in England, stars Trevor Howard (as both Scrooge and his partner-in-greed, Marley).



On Christmas Eve Scrooge faced his clerk Bob Cratchit: "You'll want all day tomorrow, I suppose? A poor excuse for picking a man's pocket! Be here all the earlier next morning."



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That evening Scrooge was terrified as Marley, his dead partner, appeared at his front door. The face had a dismal light about it like a bad lobster in a dark cellar. Double-locking himself in his bedroom, Scrooge ate his gruel. A clanking noise riveted him to his seat, and the ghost of Marley, weighted down with a chain of cashboxes and ledgers, walked through the door. Scrooge held tight to his chair to save himself from falling in a swoon as the ghost warned him of spirits to come. As Marley disappeared through the window, the air filled with moaning phantoms.

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The Spirit of Christmas Past brought tears to the miser's eyes as he recalled Scrooge's lonely image at the age of 12.
The ghost led Scrooge to a warehouse. "I was apprenticed here!" he cried. In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile, a fiddler who tuned like 59 stomach-aches, and all the employees to celebrate Christmas Eve. "Hilli-ho!" cried old Fezziwig as he started to dance. He cut so deftly that he appeared to wink with his legs, and came upon his feet again without a stagger.

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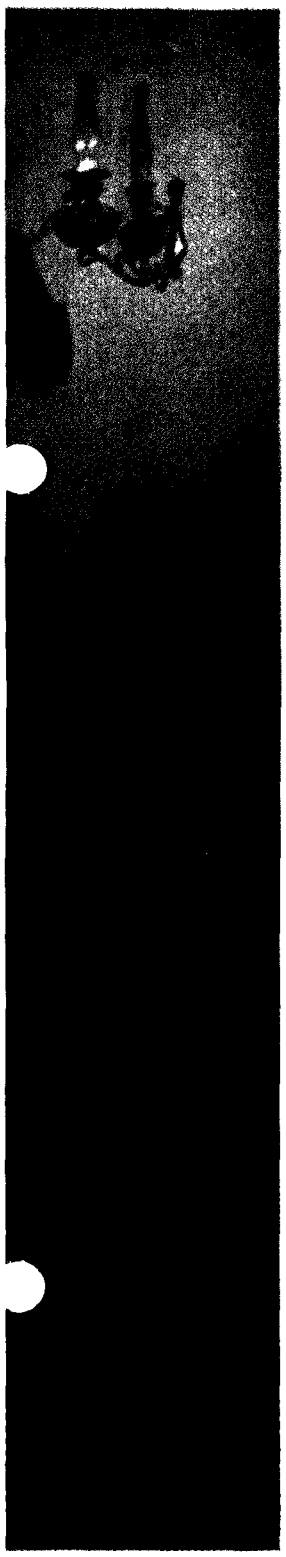

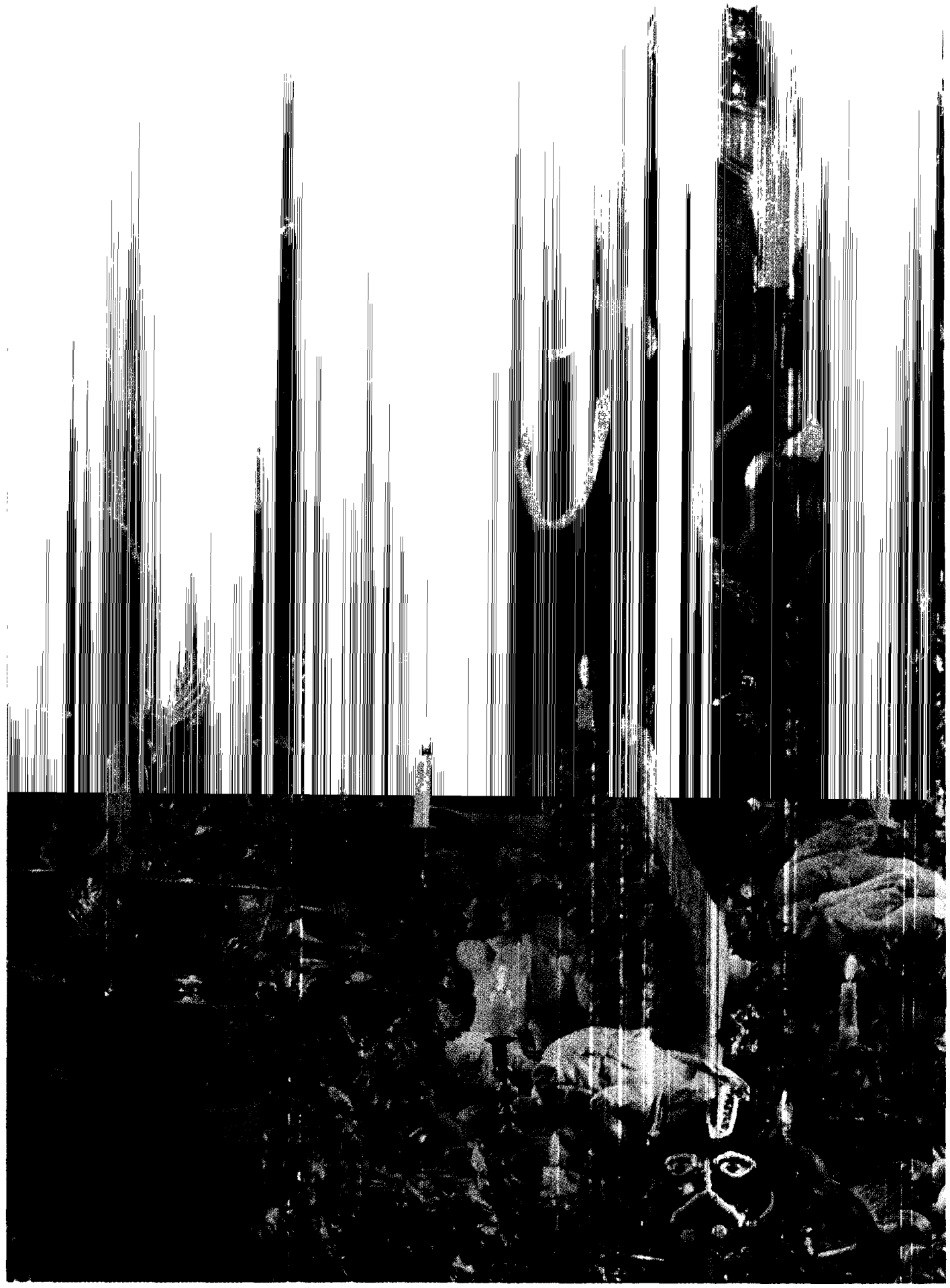

Food from Harrods of London

"Come in and know me better, man!" beckoned the Ghost of Christmas Present. Heaped up on the floor, forming a kind of throne, were turkeys, geese, great joints of meat, sucking-pigs, long wreaths of sausages, mince pies, plum puddings, barrels of oysters, red-hot chestnuts, cherry-cheeked apples, immense twelfth-cakes and seething bowls of punch. As he touched the Giant's robe the feast vanished, and Scrooge found himself watching Cratchit's simple celebration of Christmas.

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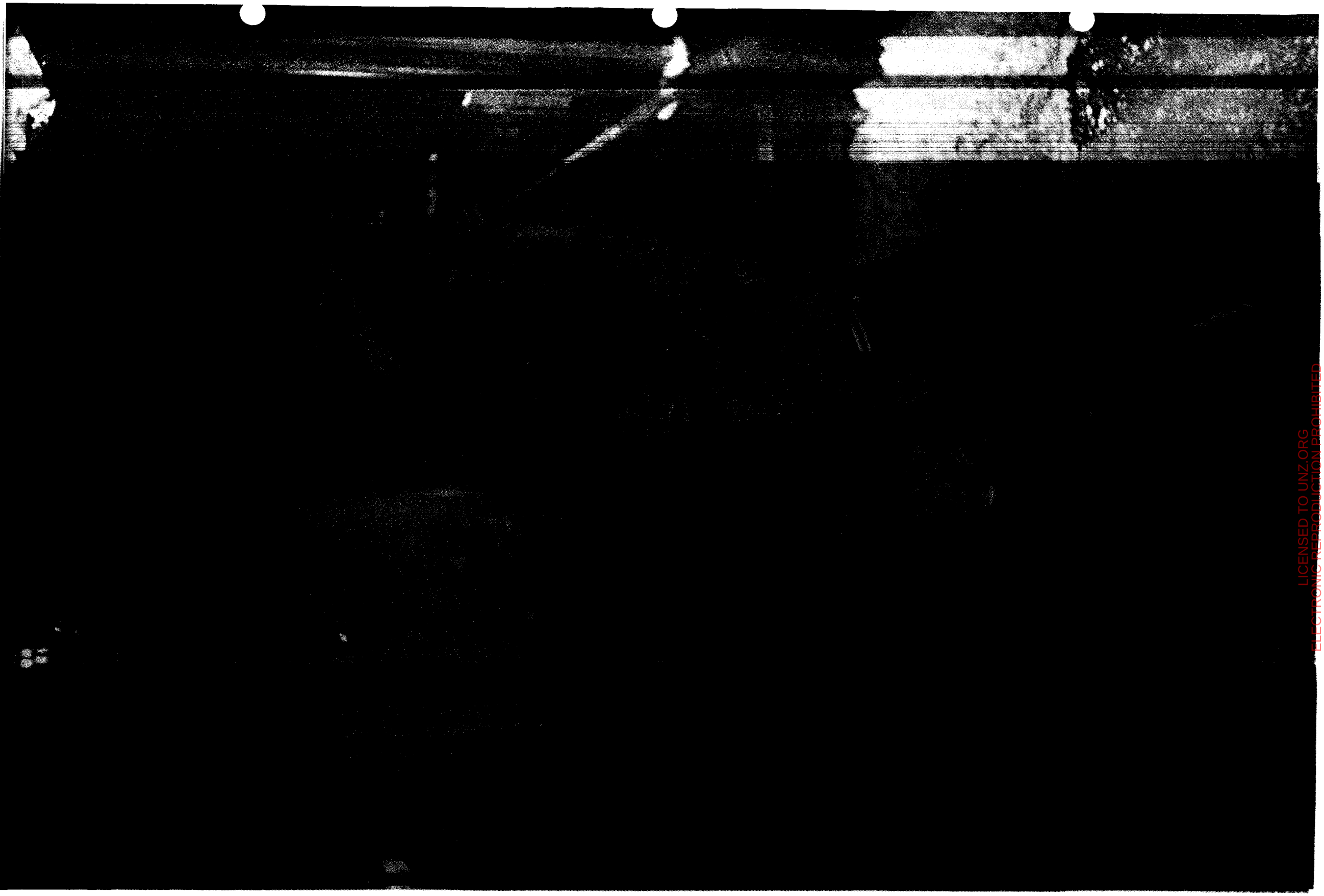

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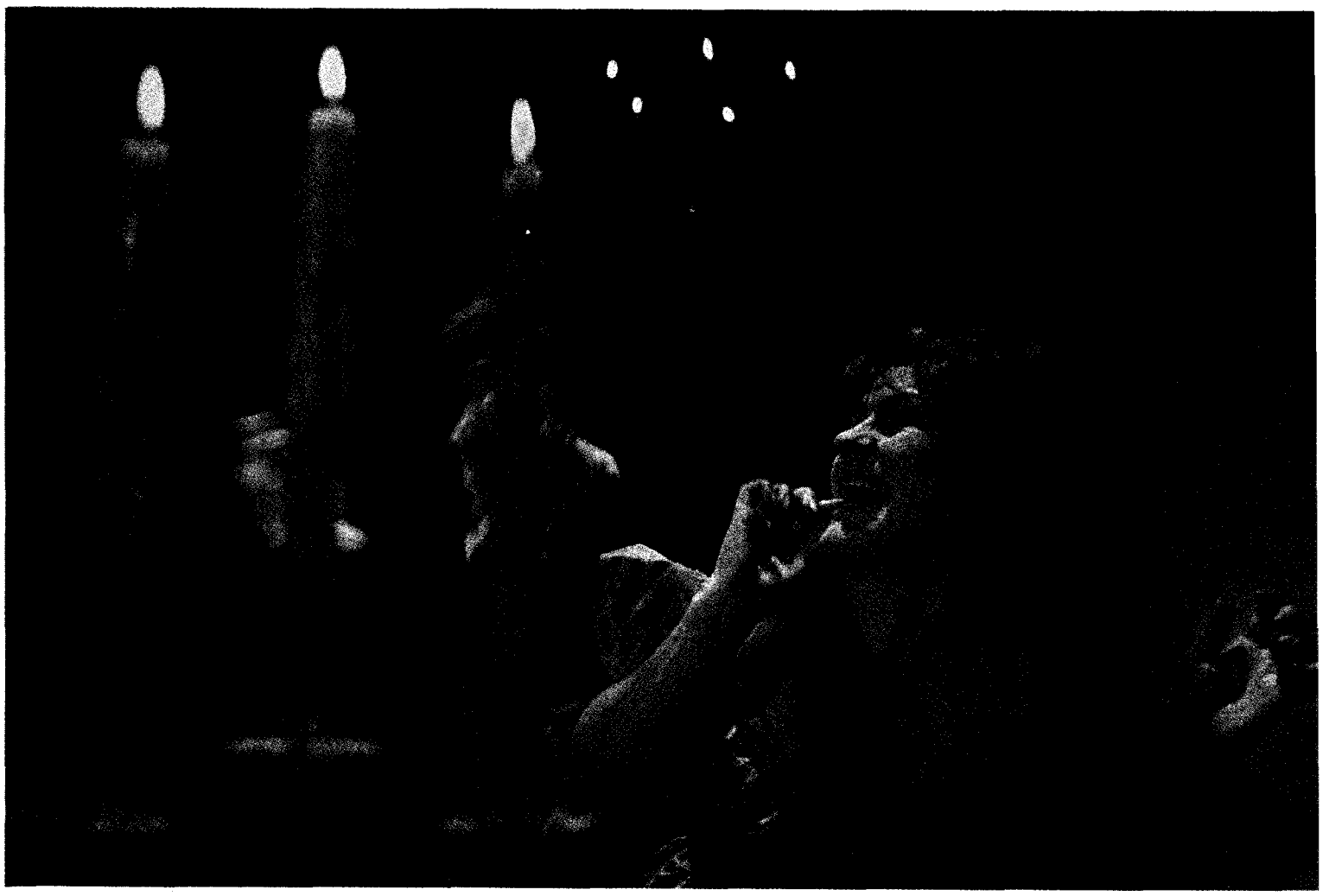

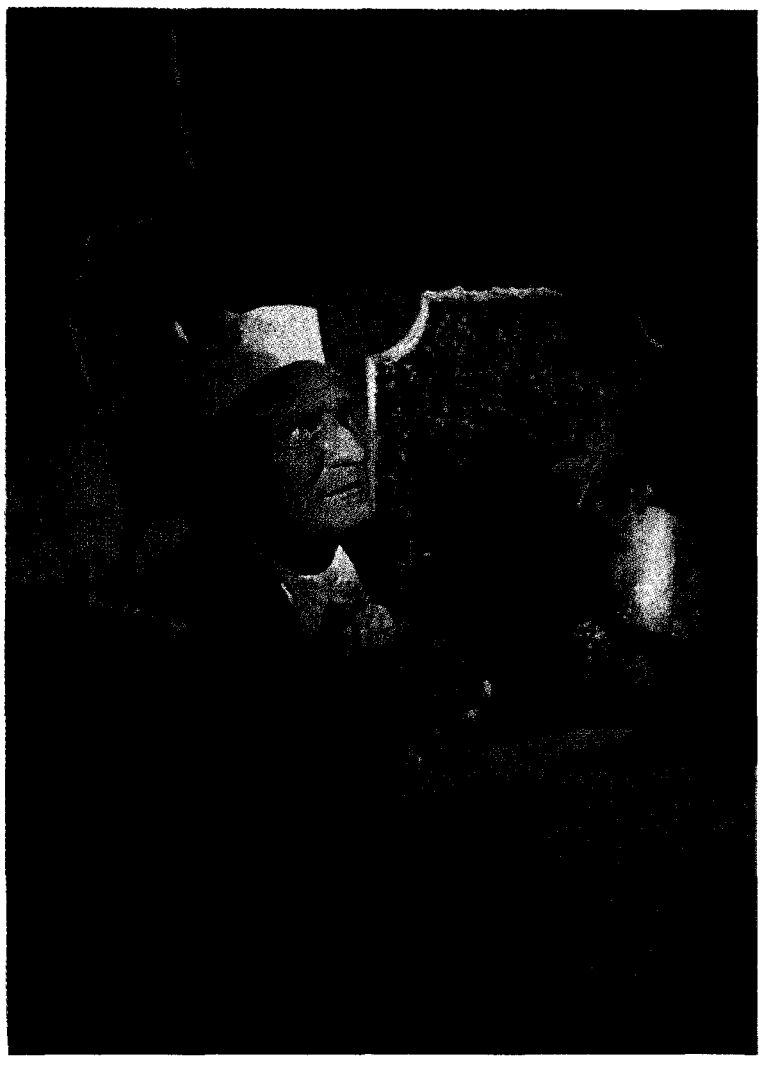

Bob Cratchit, with his threadbare clothes darned up and brushed to look seasonable and with at least three feet of comforter hanging down before him, played horse for his crippled son Tiny Tim all the way home from church. Tim hoped that people saw he was a cripple because it might be pleasant to them to remember upon Christmas Day who made lame beggars walk. Scrooge's nephew held a merry Christmas party where bachelors played blind-man's buff with plump girls in lace tuckers. The last of the three spirits, the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come, guided Scrooge to a deserted churchyard. The spirit stood among the graves and pointed down to one. Scrooge crept toward it, trembling as he went; and read upon the stone of the neglected grave his own name, EBENEZER SCROOGE. "Spirit, hear me! I am not the man I was. Assure me that I yet may change these shadows you have shown by an altered life. I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year."

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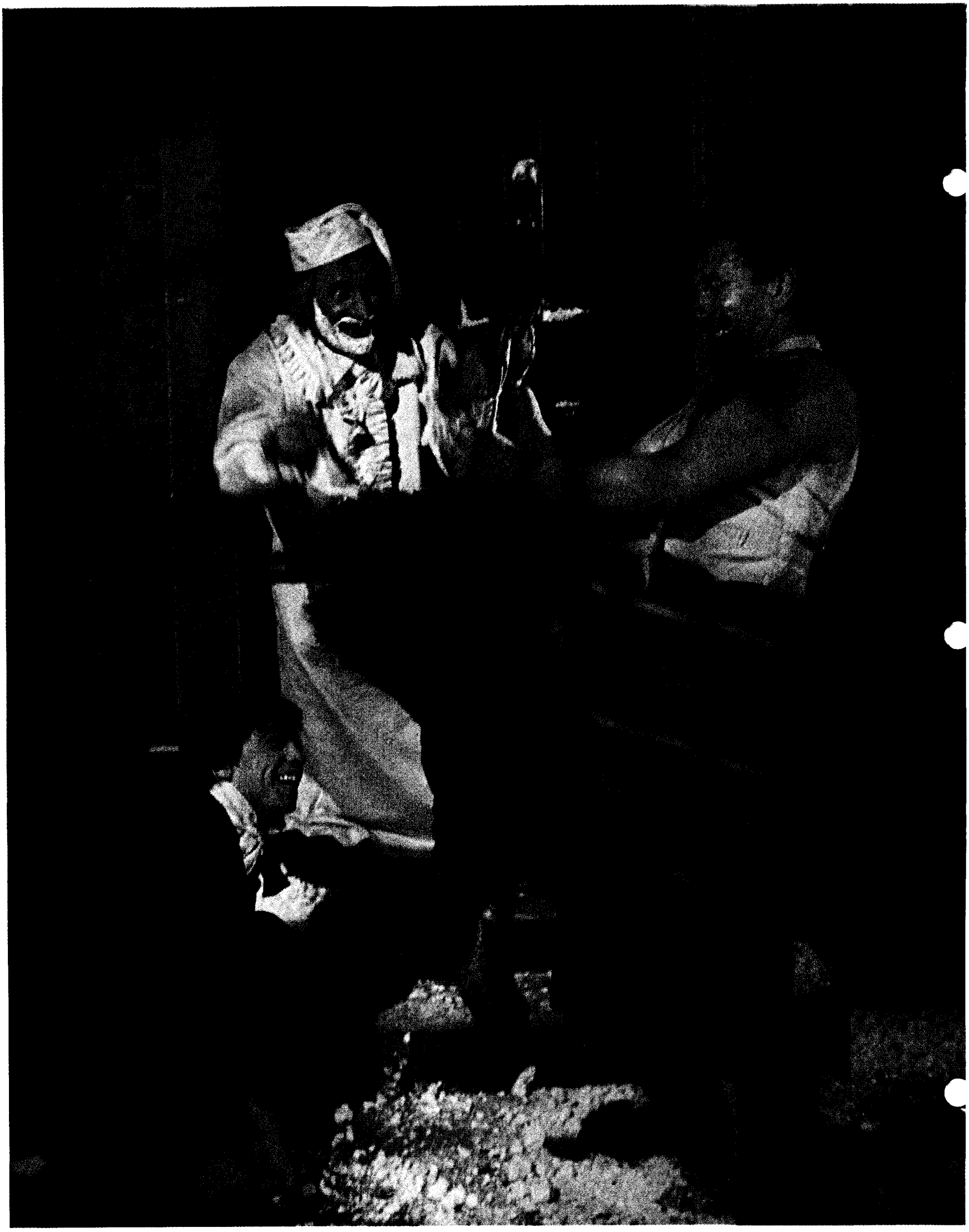

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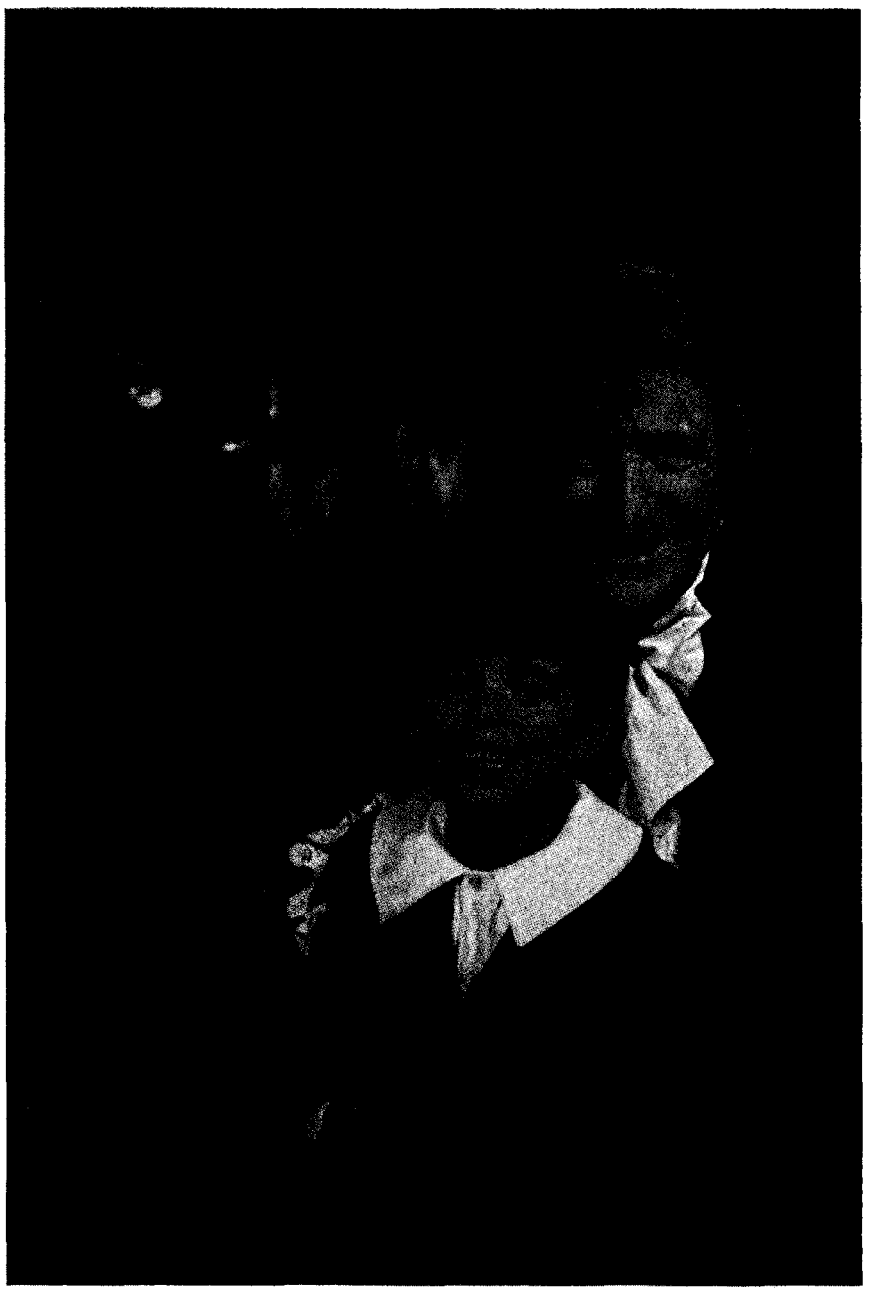
Scrooge scrambled out of bed laughing, and ran to the window. "What's today?" he called down to a boy in Sunday clothes. "Why CHRISTMAS DAY," replied the lad. "Run and fetch the poulterer with the big prize turkey and I'll give you half a crown," said Scrooge. "It's twice as big as Tiny Tim. I'll send it to Bob Cratchit's," whispered Scrooge, splitting with a laugh. "Here's the turkey. Whoop!" He chuckled when he paid for the turkey and when he recompensed the boy, and then sat down and chuckled till he cried. Scrooge dressed all in his best and went out on the streets where he regarded everyone with a delighted smile. He patted children on the head, questioned beggars, and looked down into kitchens of houses, and up to the windows; and found that everything could yield him pleasure. He spent a hearty Christmas Day with his nephew. The day after, he raced to the office to catch Cratchit coming late. "I'm not going to stand for this any longer," he thundered, and then giving Bob a dig in the waistcoat he laughed and said, "Therefore I am about to raise your salary." Scrooge was better than his word. To Tiny Tim, he was a second father. He became as good a friend, as good a master, and as good a man as the good old City knew, or any other good old city in the good old world. Some people laughed to see the alteration in him; but he was wise enough to know that nothing ever happened on this globe, for good, at which some people did not have their fill of laughter at the outset. It was always said of him that he knew how to keep Christmas well. May that be truly said of all of us. THE END



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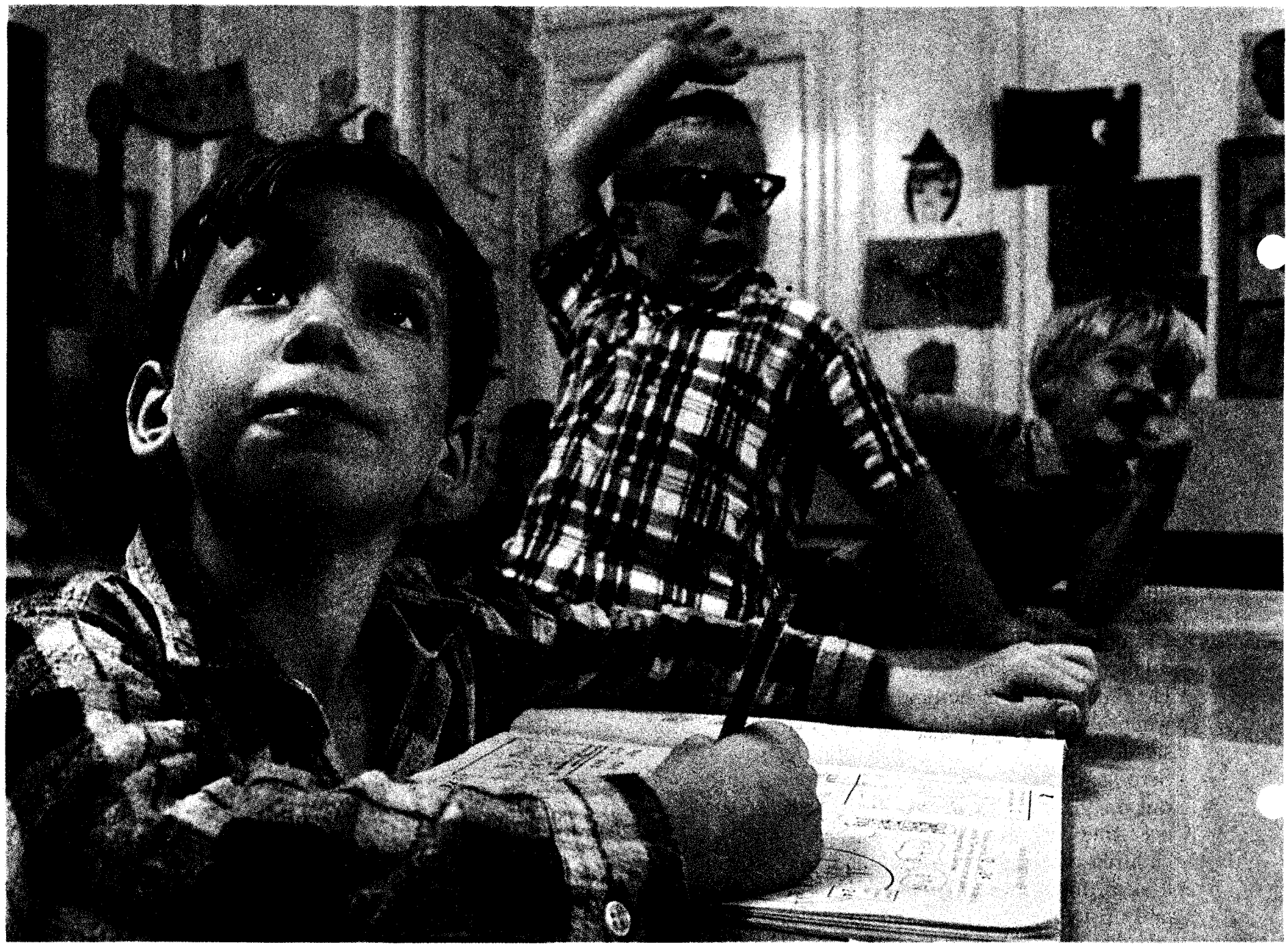
Peter (left) pays calm attention in a special school for gifted children.



THE REMARKABLE LIFE OF A LITTLE GENIUS

Alarmingly bright, six-year-old Peter Winston is far more human—and more fascinating—than the stereotyped child prodigy.

Between classes, Peter (left) amuses himself with a new-math diagram.

By Gilbert Millstein

Photographs by Charles Harbutt

One morning in August, 1963, the headmaster of the Sands Point Country Day School, a thoughtfully run institution on Long Island accommodating only intellectually gifted children, enrolled a five-year-old boy named Peter Jonathan Winston in Lower Elementary, a combination of the first two grades. The occasion was marked by the customary small talk, and in due course the headmaster, Benjamin Fine, the former education editor of *The New York Times*, asked the child when his birthday was. Peter said it was March 18, 1958, and asked Fine for the date of *his* birth; not the year, just the month and day.

"Why, September first," Fine said.

"You're lucky," Peter told him gravely. "Daddies can come to your party."

"What do you mean?" Fine asked.

"Well, your birthday's on a Sunday," the boy explained. "It's not a working day. But next year it's going to be on a Tuesday. Normally it would have been on a Monday, but 1964 will be a leap year."

Peter is a wiry, intense-looking youngster with dark-blond hair and hazel eyes, big ears, a wide, vulnerable mouth and a somewhat oracular manner of address that is in peculiar contrast to both the shape of his mouth and his childish treble. A member of the faculty has described him as looking "coiled" when

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They always eat better when you remember the soup

Start with a hungry man or child. Add a steaming bowlful of Campbell's Beef Noodle Soup. Then stand by. This hefty soup tastes so good it's hard to stop eating. And you'll be glad if you made enough for seconds—the lean beef, enriched egg noodles and brisk beef broth make this soup so good for them.

Reach for the *Campbell's* **it's right on your shelf**

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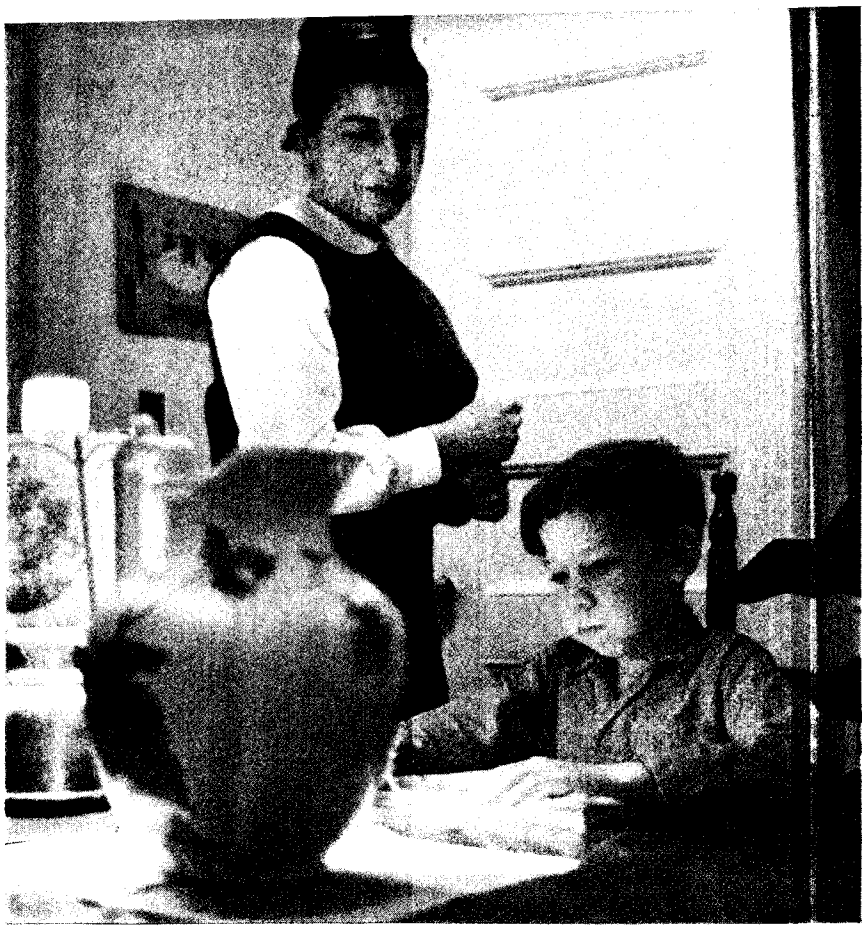

Supervising a child with an adult intellect is not easy. Above, Peter's mother tries to help with homework; below, Peter argues a point with teacher Carolyn Waggoner.

LITTLE GENIUS

he speaks. He frequently says such things as, "That girl is as silent as a stone," and "I think I have a sickness that only I know about and nobody else can understand," and "I don't think I know how to love." On the Monday following the Friday on which President Kennedy was assassinated, the child got up in class—plainly he was greatly affected—recounted the shooting in great detail (from his careful reading of newspapers and the watching of television), and delivered a long eulogy of the President. He has argued the existence of God (the teacher who overheard him in metaphysical discussion with another child was fascinated, but could not stay around long enough to hear whether the issue was resolved), and he has done such childish things as playing an entire soccer game by himself—without moving and without a ball—between the United States and Italy. The United States barely won.

The headmaster blinked at Peter after the birthday demonstration and then looked at the parents. "I *heard* him, all right," he said, "but I'm not sure I *believe* it." An almanac was consulted and, of course, Peter was right. Fine then called in Mrs. Marie Fetsch, the founder of Sands Point; Dr. Clyde Keutzer, the principal; and a secretary, each of whom was told what day of the week his birthday fell on in any year he cared to mention. The interview was concluded on an even more rarefied note: Fine and Peter chattered animatedly about positive and negative numbers. (In early months at the school, however, Peter was not always so complaisant; now and then he had a temper tantrum.)

The fact is that Peter Winston is not simply an intellectually gifted child. He is clearly a prodigy, and if intelligence tests are any criterion, at the heady level of genius. Soleyman I. Dayan, a clinical psychologist who tested him for possible admission to the school, wrote to the Winstons, "Peter is a true genius. He is 5 yrs. and 5 mos. and his range of information, arithmetical reasoning, attention, concentration and abstract reasoning is equivalent to 15 yrs. and 10 mos."

Dayan added that "due to poor coordination" the boy had difficulty holding a pencil. He later told an inquirer that were it not for this, as well as the circumstance that the boy's judgment tested out at merely average, Peter's scores on the Stanford-Binet and Wechsler tests might have pressed against the maximum; instead they were, respectively, 153 and 152. (Anything from 140 up is defined as genius.)

Peter's eminence over all but the tiniest handful of children may be gauged from these figures: Of some 48 million attending elementary and high schools in the United States, only 50,000—of whom Peter is one—have absolutely unlimited academic potential. An additional 1.5 million are superior and roughly nine million require enriched programs.

"He can do this calendar thing for any year from about 1800 to 2000," the boy's father, Leonard, a pleasant, matter-of-fact man, said recently, "and he was possibly a little more or a little less than four when we first noticed it. He taught himself out of the monthly calendars in our diaries and engagement books for past years that he found in a desk in the living room, and then he got us to get him regular calendars." There is little doubt that Peter is, as the psychologists put it, "highly motivated."

Leonard Winston is 46 and can be considered intellectually superior—if not quite in his son's class. He is a chemist and holds a master's degree in chemistry from New York University. In January he will get his master's in psychology at Fairleigh Dickinson. He is a member of Mensa, an international society of intellectuals, whose only requirement is an I.Q. in the top two percent.

The boy's mother, the former Florence Ocean of Brooklyn, is a Hunter graduate and has a master's in speech and drama from Columbia Teachers College. A rather overflowing woman physically, with long hair and liquid eyes, she acts off Broadway when the opportunity offers, but she is currently teaching at an Orthodox Jewish high school in Brooklyn to help pay Peter's tuition at Sands Point. Even with a $200 scholarship, tuition still comes to $1,300 a year. Also there is the fee for a private tutor for the couple's 16-year-old daughter, Wendy, a dark, pretty, slender girl who dances and who for personal reasons dropped out of the High School of Performing Arts for a semester. The total Winston family income is less than $15,000 a year. The four live comfortably enough, surrounded by good books and many records (classical, operatic, folk and jazz) in a four-room apartment in one of the gloomy old buildings on upper Riverside Drive. (Peter still sleeps in a crib in his parents' bedroom, a fact which has raised some eyebrows at the school.)

"What his system was, was this," the father said. "If he knew the day of the week January first fell on, he quickly taught himself the day of the week of the first day of each successive month. He would figure out any day in any year. He did this for normal *and* leap years. Here's an interesting sidelight: He had read that leap years come every fourth year. He misinterpreted that to mean that only years *ending* in four were leap years. I told him this was wrong, and he immediately reworked everything. It turned out, too, that he was making mistakes for the years before 1900. He didn't know—and neither did I—that the year 1900, for example, isn't a leap year, even though it is divisible by four. [Centesimal years must be divisible by 400.] When he found that out, he spent ten minutes or so walking around the carpet in the living room as though he was resetting some computer in his head."

In a sense, this was the case. At the time, the boy was unable to write, and his writing is still a bit more childish than that of his contemporaries. His parents and the Sands Point people believe that the reason for this is simply that Peter bypassed writing and other things requiring manual dexterity because he was utterly absorbed in things of the mind. When he had something to express for the record, he dictated it to a grown-up. Thus there exist limericks he wrote during his first year in school: "There once was a yellow canary/ Who grew up to be very hairy./ He fluttered and fluffed,/ And huffed and puffed,/ As he sang—this hairy canary," and "There once was a red-jacket boy/ Who wore as a hat, a toy./ He lost his hat/ and found a cat/ And now is a cat-hat boy." Peter's facility with rhyme may have derived in part from his mother's practice, only lately abandoned, of writing a daily poem for his lunch bag (Peter refuses to eat the Sands Point food) and another to greet him on his homecoming.

The boy started doing the things expected of a prodigy at an appropriately early age. He was 18 months old when he taught himself the alphabet off the spines of volumes of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, from A to ANNO clear through VASE to ZYGO. By the time he was two, he had taught himself to read by poring over the texts on the back of record albums. Eventually he could read anything in the *Britannica*, the *Book of Knowledge* and the *World Book Encyclopedia*, to say nothing of his mother's volumes of Shakespeare and his father's Lange's *Handbook of Chemistry—A Reference Volume for All Requiring Ready Access to Chemical and Physical Data Used in Laboratory Work and Manufacturing*, all of which have served him bountifully.

"When he was nine months old," Mrs. Winston recalled, "he had a little rocking chair. I might be getting dressed to go

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out with him, and I might put a symphony on the player. You ought to have seen the transfixed look on him. He would sit through entire symphonies. Tchaikovsky, Beethoven, Mozart. He loved Kabalevsky's suite, *The Comedians*, especially. Then, later, he began to walk around carrying records, the way other children do toys."

"You couldn't pry him loose from them," the father said. "He broke plenty, d he ruined a lot. If there was a group eight folk songs on one side of a record, he would know not only the songs but their exact order. If you started a note late on a symphony, he would shout, 'Play it from the beginning,' and he would ask for a specific movement."

This reminded Mrs. Winston of something. "He had difficulty in relating to other children," she said. "He'd get into a sandbox with them and say, 'I've got Kabalevsky's *The Comedians*.' How could they respond to that? It bothered him that they didn't, and so sometimes he would be sad, sometimes aggressive. One of his teachers felt he used his reading as a way of solving the problems of getting along with other children, which he wanted so badly to do."

Before he was two, Peter learned numbers from a set of cards on which the digits were keyed to the names of trees—hemlock, 32; shagbark hickory, 9; bald cypress, 1—and for a while he puzzled his parents by calling out the names of trees every time he saw numbers in the windows of stores. At two he could tell time. "The pattern of his learning seems always to have been complete absorption with a particular subject," Mrs. Winston served. "Day in and day out he was h clocks; he begged me to take clocks wherever we went; friends and neighbors brought him old clocks. Again, *those* were his toys." The child even got a neighborhood grocer, William Haledjian, to give up the clockface with movable hands that he used to announce the store's business hours. Six months later Peter had familiarized himself with weights and measures and clamored to be lifted up to weigh things on the store's hanging scales. For a while he was similarly preoccupied with thermometers.

He mastered fractions at three. "I opened a tangerine for him one day," his mother remembers. "At once he saw that the parts made up a whole. He questioned me. And he learned that this is a half, and this is half of a half and is called a quarter, and how much half a quarter was." He has since learned to fractionize to almost any part desired. He can add, subtract, multiply and divide and is working on learning square roots. He rendered grocer Haledjian speechless by multiplying two three-digit numbers with fractions in them. This was all done orally—Peter could not write then—and he got his answer out almost as fast as Haledjian subsequently was e to verify it on a small adding machine.

Currently Peter is absorbing the names, capitals and populations of all 50 states and when they entered the union, and the names, ages and terms of office of every President. A recent visitor of the Winstons got the distinct impression that the boy, while fully cognizant of what he can do, nevertheless tries hard to be his age, making himself artless in conversation, and, as children are apt to be, alternately wheedling and forward, although not in an unpleasant way. At such times Peter seems to flop around an adult, wooing him with his eyes, but also making no bones about what it is he wants.

"How come you're so interested in me?" he asked. "I am unusual, a little," he answered himself. "I like arithmetic because it's numbers. I like to add and subtract and multiply. It's fun to me.

"I taught myself *all* these things," he said, punctuating the declaration with a hard bang of his fist on half a dozen of the typewriter's keys. "I don't know how I became interested in them; I just did. I like to read hard books, such as *The Human Organism*. I like clocks, but clocks are part of arithmetic. So are coins. I like my cats; one is black and one is striped. The children at school are nice too. Now I like to play outside; I like to drive on my bike and I like sports—baseball. I want to be many things. That includes, number one, a baseball player; number two, a country helper. A country helper is someone who goes around alleviating a country's troubles, stopping wars. Number three, I want to be a chemist. I guess that's all. Maybe there are more, but I've forgotten. I know there is a lot to learn before I grow up. I don't like to watch television anymore, not even Westerns, which I used to like."

There has always been an idea abroad—conclusively disproved—that gifted children are "physically retarded, unsocial, spectacled, 'booky' misfits." While Peter is doubtless "booky," he is neither retarded, spectacled nor unsocial. The psychologist who tested him, Doctor Dayan, said that Peter's relative deficiency in judgment—that is, in estimating the relative importance of various things and concepts—indicated some kind of emotional problem, but since he had not given Peter a personality test, he was loath to commit himself. Peter's parents naturally feel that their son is, apart from his prodigious qualities, a perfectly normal, outgoing little fellow. As Mrs. Winston told an acquaintance, "He's calming down now. He learned to swim this past summer, and now he rides his tricycle and plays ball.

"My husband, Leonard, says we're like the poor fisherman and his wife who were given a gem. We don't quite know what to do with this gem. We haven't got any plans for Peter. We just want him to be happy. It's sort of corny to say that, I know. Maybe he won't be able to make use of this vast potential; maybe something will get in the way. But I have hopes that nothing will. I'm not really fearful for him, but I am protective. A few weeks ago, when he was going to sleep, he said to me, 'Do you want me to be famous?' I said no, I didn't care so much about that. I wanted him to give the best of himself rather than worry about being famous. You know, I told him, there are many fine people who have good minds, but they are lazy and don't give the best of themselves. Do you know what he said to me? 'How can they be considered fine? I will give all of myself.'"

It was partly because of the imbalance between learning and dexterity that Peter was sent to Sands Point. During his first year he was, in the words of one of his teachers, "forever flying apart. It was impossible to keep him zipped up and buttoned up; he would lose his shoes and he never seemed to know where his things were." Mrs. Winston says, a little defensively, that if a child's mind is on "other things," he tends to "overlook such matters as jackets and briefcases." She concedes that "his ineptness in doing things made me help him a little more than I might have." His improvement in this area has been marked—from writing to general kemptness. He is no longer subject to tantrums. His teachers are convinced that the tantrum throwing during his first year at the school was an attention-getting device; so, they add, were his clinging and hand kissing and present giving. It is the consensus of half a dozen of his classmates that they like him better now than they did last year.

If Peter's intellectual abilities alone were taken into account, the child would be at the upper-high-school level. But, as the Sands Point's principal, Doctor Keutzer, says, "At present, all we want to do is make him get along with his peers. We can't put him where he belongs intellectually. That's our biggest problem with him. He has to learn the fundamentals—how to hold things, how to draw, how to write. We'd be defeating our purpose—which is to make a little boy out of him, rather than a little monster—if we let him learn unhindered. So we keep him with his own age group.

"In him you can see clearly the difference between having a child on the genius level and one who is merely intellectually gifted. The problems! Let us say that he has been hurt. He will cry like a child. Well, you caress him out of crying and comfort him, but suddenly you find you must adjust—after he's stopped crying, you can't talk to him as a child. He has to be talked to on an adult level.

"Unconsciously last year I was playing a father role toward Peter," Doctor Keutzer reminisced. "I couldn't disassociate myself from him emotionally. Now, I find my whole attitude has changed. Then I had to *help* this little fellow. This year I feel not only fatherly toward him, but I see him as a personality I can accept—not something unbelievable pulled out of a cage." THE END

Until recently, Peter was uncoordinated, but now his physical development is catching up, and he romps happily at school.

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The Secret Integration

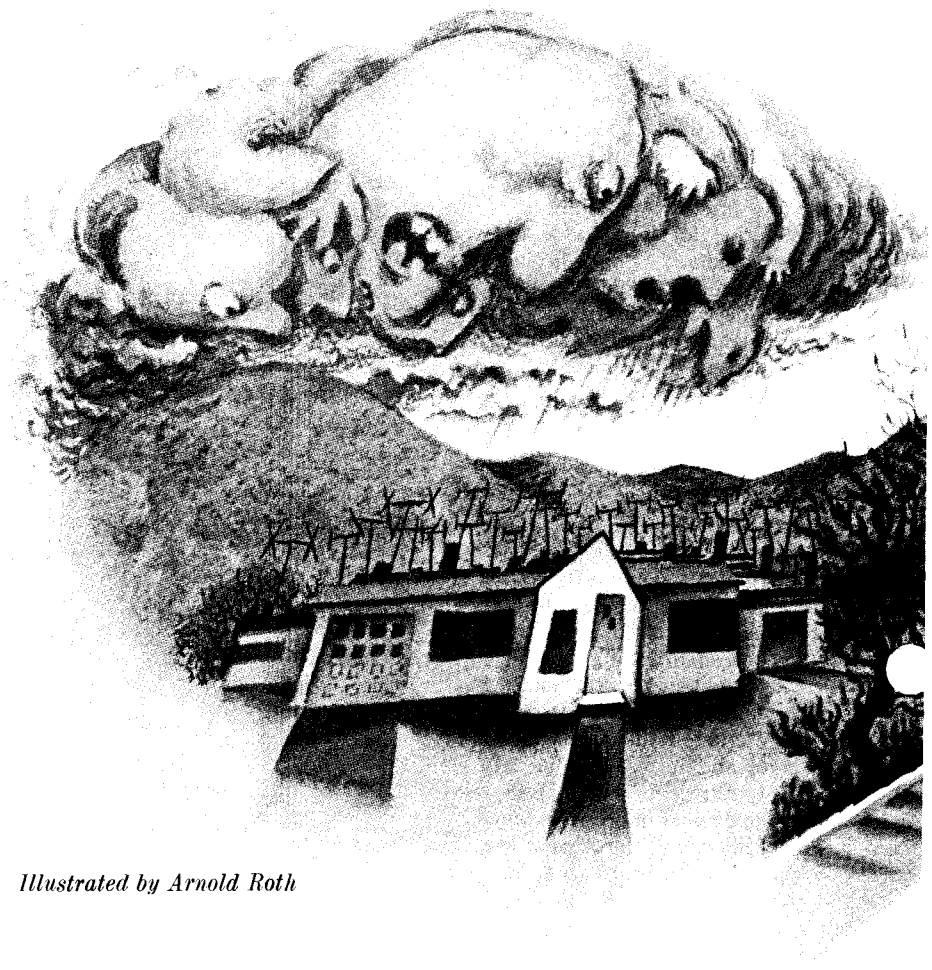
By THOMAS PYNCHON

Against the ignorant armies of the adult world, what can children do? Wage total war until bedtime.

Outside it was raining, the first rain of October, end of haying season and of the fall's full brilliance, purity of light, a certain soundness to weather that had brought New Yorkers flooding up through the Berkshires not too many weekends ago to see the trees changing in that sun. Today, by contrast, it was Saturday and raining, a lousy combination. Inside at the moment was Tim Santora, waiting for ten o'clock and wondering how he was going to get out past his mother. Grover wanted to see him at ten this morning, so he had to go. He sat curled in an old washing machine that lay on its side in a back room of the house; he listened to rain going down a drainpipe and looked at a wart that was on his finger. The wart had been there for two weeks and wasn't going to go away. The other day his mother had taken him over to Doctor Slothrop, who painted some red stuff on it, turned out the lights and said, "Now, when I switch on my magic purple lamp, watch what happens to the wart." It wasn't a very magic-looking lamp, but when the doctor turned it on, the wart glowed a bright green. "Ah, good," said Doctor Slothrop. "Green. That means the wart will go away, Tim. It hasn't got a chance." But as they were going out, the doctor said to Tim's mother, in a lowered voice Tim had learned how to listen in on, "Suggestion therapy works about half the time. If this doesn't clear up now spontaneously, bring him back and we'll try liquid nitrogen." Soon as he got home, Tim ran over to ask Grover what "suggestion therapy" meant. He found him down in the cellar, working on another invention.

Grover Snodd was a little older than Tim, and a boy genius. Within limits, anyway. A boy genius with flaws. His inventions, for example, didn't always work. And last year he'd had this racket, doing everybody's homework for them at a dime an assignment. But he'd given himself away too often. They knew somehow (they had a "curve," according to Grover, that told them how well everybody was supposed to do) that it was him behind all the 90s and 100s kids started getting. "You can't fight the law of averages," Grover said, "you can't fight the curve." So they went to work earnestly on his parents to talk them into transferring him. Someplace. Anyplace. Expert though he might be on every school topic from igneous rocks to Indian raids, Grover was still too dumb, as Tim saw it, to cover up how smart he was. Whenever he had a chance to show it, he'd always weaken. In a problem like somebody's yard's a triangle, find the area, Grover couldn't resist bringing in a little trigonometry, which half the class couldn't even pronounce, or calculus, a word they saw from time to time in the outer-space comics and was only a word. But Tim and others were tolerant about it. Why shouldn't Grover show off? He had a hard time sometimes. It wasn't any use talking to people his own age about higher mathematics or higher anything else. He used to discuss foreign policy with his father, Grover confided to Tim, until one night they'd had a serious division of views over Berlin. "I knew what they ought to do," Grover yelled (he always yelled—at walls, at anything else solid that happened to be around—to let you know it wasn't you he was mad at but something else, something to do with the scaled-up world adults made, remade and lived in without him, some inertia and stubbornness he was too small, except inside himself, to overcome), "exactly what they should do." But when Tim asked what, Grover only said, "Never mind. The thing we argued about isn't important. But now we don't talk; that *is* important. When I'm home now they let me alone and I let them alone." This year he was only home on weekends and Wednesdays. Other days he commuted twenty miles to college, a Berkshire men's college patterned on Williams but smaller, to take courses and talk to people about higher everything. The public school had won, had banished him. They didn't have time for him, and wanted everybody doing their own homework. It was apparently OK with Grover's father too, because of that estrangement over Berlin. "It isn't that he's stupid, or mean," Grover yelled at his family's oil burner. "He isn't. It's worse than that. He understands things that I don't care about. And I care about things he'll never understand."

"I don't get it," said Tim. "Hey, Grover, what's 'suggestion therapy' mean?"



Illustrated by Arnold Roth

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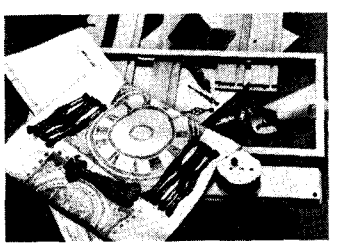

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HERITAGE CLOCK (above left). A stately 27" tall, 11½" wide. Cross-stitch design inspired by the White House and the Presidential Seal, richly-hued in blue, green, red, orange and gold. Complete with Westclox electric or transistorized battery movement that runs for one year on a flashlight battery.

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"Like faith healing," said Grover. "That how they're trying to get rid of that wart?"

"Yeah." He told about the red stuff that glowed green, and the lamp.

"Ultraviolet fluorescence," Grover said, having obvious fun with the words, "has no effect on the wart. They're trying to talk it away, but I just messed that up for them," and he started laughing, rolling around on the floor of the cellar, as if somebody was tickling him. "It won't work. When it wants to go away, it will, that's all. Warts have a mind of their own."

It tickled Grover any time he could interfere with the scheming of grownups. It never occurred to Tim to want to figure out why this was so. Grover himself cared only slightly about his own motives. "They think I'm smarter than I am," he hazarded once. "They have this idea about a 'boy genius,' I think—what one is supposed to be, you know. They see them on television or something, and that's what they want me to be like." He'd been very mad that day, Tim remembered, because a new invention hadn't worked out. A sodium grenade: two compartments, sodium and water, separated by a burst-diaphragm. When the sodium came in contact with the water, it would go off with a tremendous bang. But the diaphragm was too strong or something, and it wouldn't break. To make things worse, Grover had been reading *Tom Swift and His Wizard Camera*, by Victor Appleton. He kept coming across these Tom Swift books by apparent accident, though he had developed the theory lately that it was by design; that the books were coming across *him*, and that his parents and/or the school were deeply involved. Tom Swift books were a direct affront to him, as if he were expected to compete, to build even better inventions and make even more money on them and invest it more wisely than Tom Swift.

"I hate Tom Swift!" he yelled.

"Quit reading those books, then," Tim suggested.

But Grover couldn't; he tried, but he couldn't stop. Every time one of them popped up, as if from an invisible, malevolent toaster, he'd devour it. It was an addiction; he was haunted by Aerial Warships, Electric Rifles. "It's awful," he said, "the guy's a show-off, he talks funny, and he's a snob, and"—hitting his head to remember the word—"a racist."

"A what?"

"You know this colored servant Tom Swift has, remember, named Eradicate Sampson? Rad for short. The way he treats that guy, it's disgusting. Do they want me to read that stuff so I'll be like that?"

"Maybe that's how," said Tim, excited, having figured it out all at once, "how they want you to be with Carl." He meant Carl Barrington, a colored kid they knew. His family had moved here from Pittsfield not so long ago. The Barringtons lived in Northumberland Estates, a new development out across an abandoned quarry and a couple of rye fields from the older part of Mingeborough that Grover and Tim lived in. Like them, and Étienne Cherdlu, Carl was a nut for practical jokes, not just watching and laughing, but for actually playing them and thinking up new ones, this being one reason the four of them hung around together. The suggestion that Rad, a character in a book, had anything to do with Carl puzzled Grover.

"Don't they like Carl, or what?" he said."

"I don't think it's him. It's his mother and father."

"What did they do?"

Tim made a don't-ask-me face. "Pittsfield is a city," he said. "I guess you can do almost anything in a city. Maybe they ran a numbers game."

"You got that from watching television," Grover accused, and Tim said yeah and laughed. Grover said, "Does your mother know that you and me and Carl go out—you know—fool around?"

"I didn't tell her," Tim said. "She didn't say not to."

"Don't tell her," said Grover. Tim didn't. It wasn't that Grover ever gave orders, but there was an understanding among all of them that even though sometimes he was wrong about things, he still knew more than any of the rest of them and they ought to listen to him. If he told you that a wart wasn't going to go away, that it had a mind of its own, all the purple lights and green fluorescence in Massachusetts would not prevail. The wart would stay.

Tim looked at the wart, a little leery about it, as if it did have a separate intelligence. If he'd been a few years younger, he would have given the wart a name, but he was beginning to realize only little kids named things. Now he sat inside the washing machine he'd used last year for a space capsule, listened to the rain, began to think of getting old, and then older and older without bound, cut the thought off before it modulated to the matter of dying, decided to ask Grover today if he'd learned anything new about the other thing, the liquid nitrogen. "Nitrogen is a gas," Grover had told him, "I never heard of it being a liquid." That was all. But he might have something today. You never knew what he was going to come back from college with. Once he'd brought a multicolored model of a protein molecule, which was now in the hideout, along with the Japanese TV and the sodium stockpile, a bunch of old transmission parts from Étienne Cherdlu's father's junkyard, concrete bust of Alf Landon stolen in one of the weekly raids on Mingeborough Park, busted Mies van der Rohe chair salvaged from another of the old estates, not to mention assorted chandelier pieces, fragments of tapestries, teak newels, one fur overcoat they could hang around the neck of the bust and hide under sometimes, like in a tent.

Tim rolled out of the machine and went as quietly as he could into the kitchen to check the clock. It was a little past ten. Grover was never on time himself, but he always wanted other people to be. "Punctuality," he would declaim, rolling the word at you like an invincible purey, "is not one of your salient virtues." All you had to say to him then was "Huh?" and he'd forget it and get down to business. One of the reasons Tim liked him.

Tim's mother wasn't in the living room, the television was off, and at first he thought she might have gone out. He pulled his raincoat down off the hanger in the hall closet and started for the back door. Then he heard her dialing. He came around a corner, and there she was under the back stairs, holding the blue Princess telephone between her jaw and shoulder. She'd been dialing with one hand and holding the other in front of her in a tight, pale fist. There was a look on her face Tim had never seen before. A little—what do you call it, nervous? scared?—he didn't know. If she saw him there she gave no sign, though he'd made noise enough. The receiver stopped buzzing, and somebody answered.

"You niggers," his mother spat out suddenly, "dirty niggers, get out of this town, go back to Pittsfield. Get out before you get in real trouble." Then she hung up fast. The hand that was in a fist had been shaking, and now her other hand, once it let go of the receiver, started shaking a little too. She turned swiftly, as if she'd smelled him like a deer; caught Tim looking at her in astonishment.

"Oh, you," she said, beginning to smile, except for her eyes.

"What were you doing?" Tim said, which wasn't what he'd meant to ask.

"Oh, playing a joke, Tim," she said, "a practical joke."

Tim shrugged and went on out the back door. "I'm going out," he told her, without looking back. He knew she wouldn't give him any trouble now about it, because he'd caught her.

He ran out into the rain and past two wet lilac bushes, down a slope into long grass turned to hay, his sneakers soaked after only a couple-three steps. Grover Snodd's house, an older one than Tim's with a gambrel roof, edged out from behind a big maple to greet him. When he'd been younger Tim used to think of the house as a person, and say hello to it each time he came over, as if it actually were peeking around the maple at him, friendly, in a kind of game between friends. He still was not at the point where he could give this up completely; it would be cruel to the house to stop believing in it. So: "Hi, house," he said, as usual. The house had a face on the end, a pleasant old face, windows for eyes and nose, a face that always seemed to be smiling. Tim ran on by it, for just a moment only a shadow, dwarfed against the towering, benevolent face. The rain was coming down pretty hard. He skidded around a corner and up to another maple with pieces of board nailed to the side of the trunk. Up, slipping once, and out a long limb to Grover's window. Whistling, electronic sounds came from inside. "Grovie," Tim said, banging on the window. "Hey."

Grover opened the window and announced to Tim that he had a lamentable tendency to dilatoriness.

"Wha?" said Tim.

"I just heard a kid in New York," Grover told him as Tim climbed into the room. "There's something funny with the sky today, because—you know—I have trouble most of the time just getting Springfield." Grover was a radio ham. He put together his own transceiver rigs and test equipment. Not only the sky but these mountains, too, made incoming signals capricious. Grover's room, certain nights when Tim stayed over, filled as the hour grew late with disembodied voices, sometimes even from as far away as the sea. Grover liked to listen but he seldom transmitted to anybody. He had road maps stuck up on the wall and each time he heard a new voice he'd mark it on the map, along with the frequency. Tim had never seen him sleep. He'd still be up no matter what time Tim turned in, fooling with dials, pressing a huge pair of rubber earphones to his head. There was a speaker too; sometimes he had that on. Drifting in and out of sleep, Tim would hear, mixed with dreams, cops being called to investigate car wrecks or just noises or shadows that moved where everything should have been still, cabbies out to meet the night's trains and grouching mostly about coffee or cracking dry jokes with their dispatcher, some half of a chess game, tugs across the Dutch Hills taking a string of gravel barges down the Hudson, road workers in the autumn and winter working late getting out snow fence or plowing, a merchantman at sea now and then when the thing in the sky, the Heaviside layer, was right for it—all these coming down, filtering through to populate his dreams, so that in the morning he'd never know which had been real, which he'd hallucinated. Grover never was any help. Waking up, before he was fully out of dreams, Tim would say, "Grovie, what about the lost raccoon? The cops find him?" or, "What about that Canadian logger in the houseboat up the river?" And Grover would always answer, "I don't remember that." When Étienne Cherdlu stayed over too, he'd remember different things than Tim did: singing, or badger-watchers reporting in

"What has four wheels and flies? What kind of a noise annoys an oyster? Why do peanuts whistle? How. . . ."

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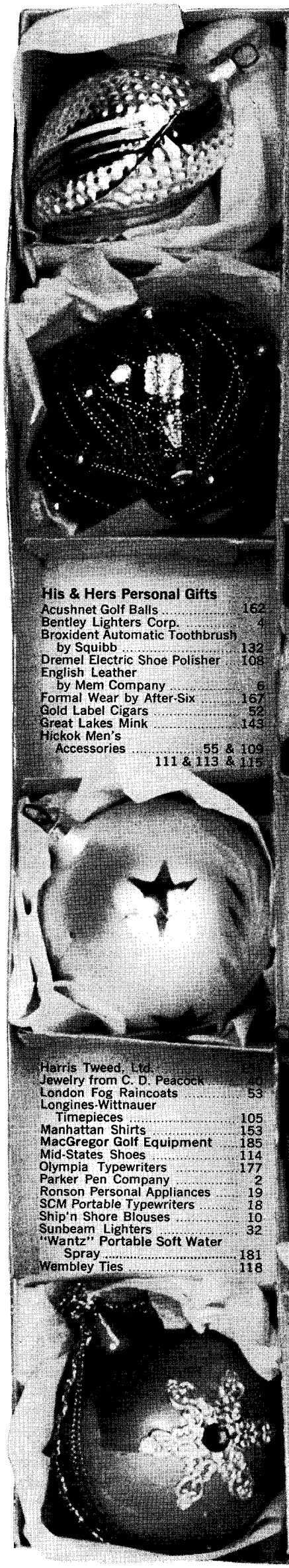

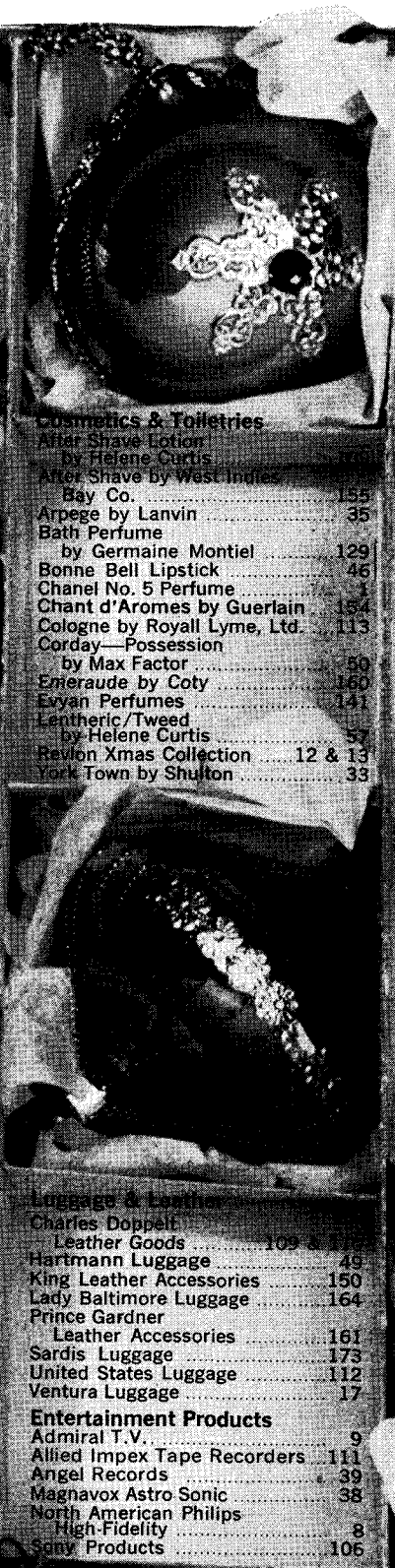

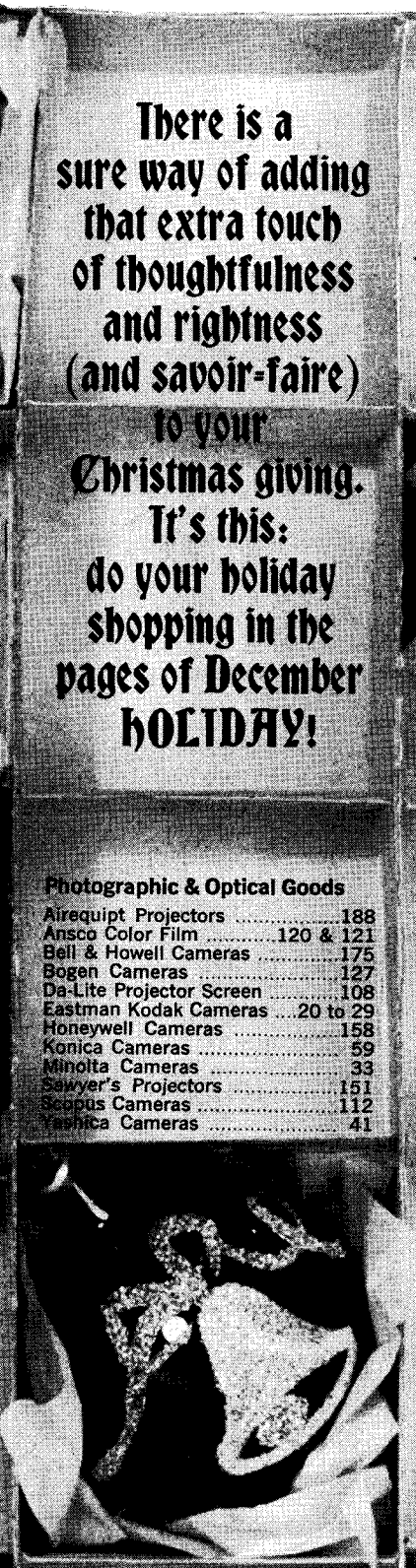

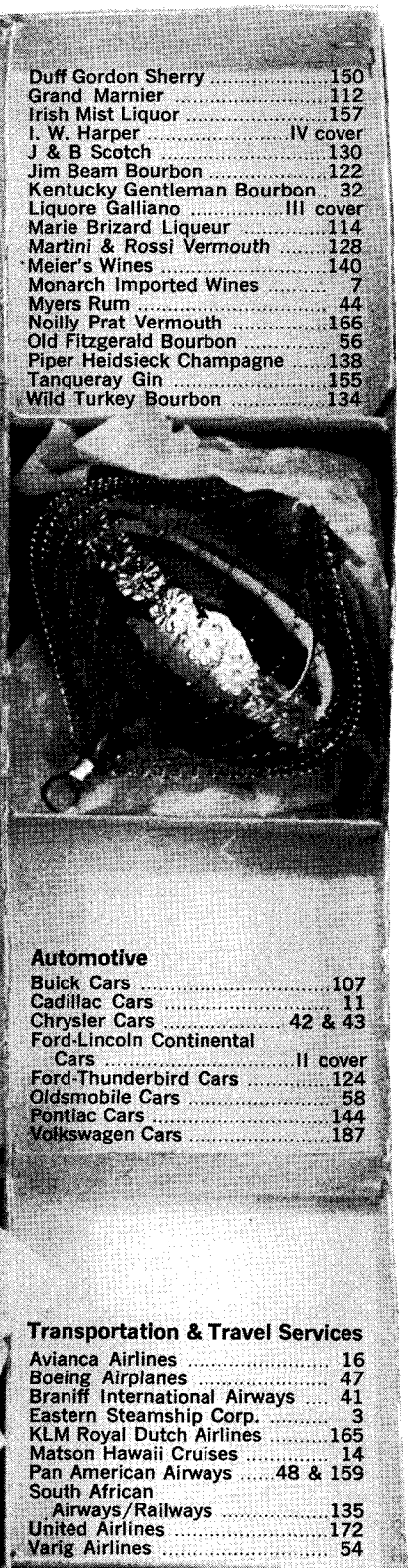

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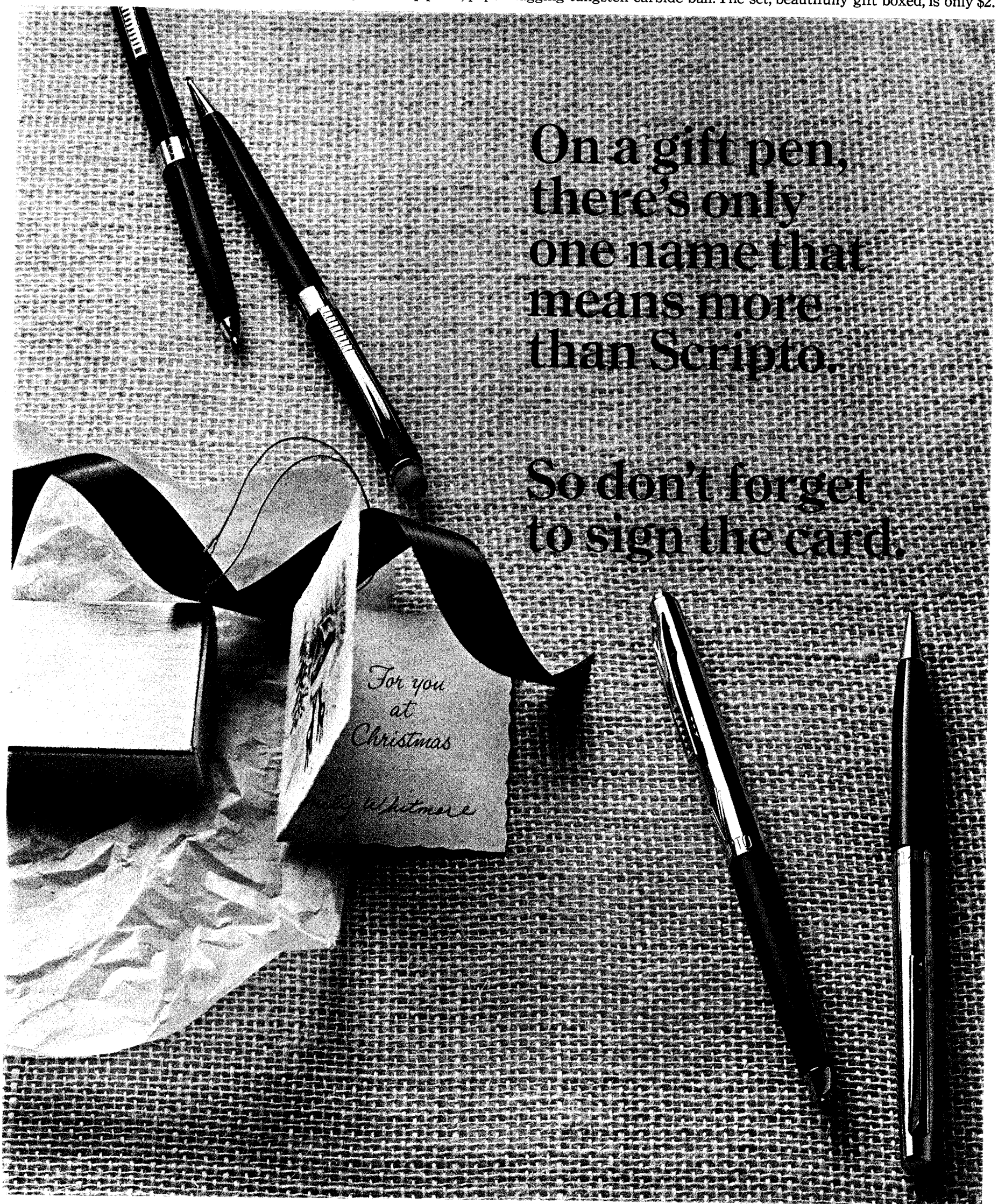

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to some kind of headquarters, or bitter arguments, half in Italian, about pro football.

Étienne was supposed to be here today too. It was a regular Saturday-morning briefing session. Probably his father had kept him late again working over at the junkyard. He was a very fat kid who wrote his name "80N," usually on telephone poles with "ha, ha" after it, in crayon, yellow keel swiped from road crews. Like Tim and Grover and Carl, Étienne loved to play practical jokes, only with him it was an obsession. Grover was a genius, Tim wanted someday to become a basketball coach, Carl might star on one of his teams, but Étienne, all he could see was a career somehow playing jokes. "That's crazy," kids would tell him. "A career? You mean a comedian or something on TV, a clown, what?" And Étienne, putting his arm around your shoulders (which, if you were alert enough, you realized he was doing not out of friendship but to Scotch-tape a sign to you reading MY MOTHER WEARS COMBAT BOOTS, or KICK HERE, with an arrow), would tell you, "My father says everything's going to be machines when we grow up. He says the only jobs open will be in junkyards for busted machines. The only thing a machine *can't* do is play jokes. That's all they'll use people for, is jokes."

The kids might have been right: maybe he was a little crazy. He took chances nobody else would, letting air out of tires on cop cars, putting on skin-diving gear to stir up silt in the creek the paper mill used (which once stopped production for nearly a week), leaving silly and almost meaningless notes signed "The Phantom" on the principal's desk while she was out of her office teaching eighth grade—stuff like that. He hated institutions. His great enemies, his jokes' perpetual targets, were the school, the railroad, the PTA. He had gathered around him a discontented bunch the principal, when she was yelling at them, never failed to call "uneducable," a word none of them understood and which Grover wouldn't explain to them because it made him mad, it was like calling somebody a wop, or a nigger. Étienne's friends included the Mostly brothers, Arnold and Kermit, who sniffed airplane glue and stole mousetraps from the store, which for fun they would then cock, stand out in the middle of some empty field and throw at each other; Kim Dufay, a slender, exotic-looking sixth-grader with a blond pigtail that hung to her waist and was usually blue on the end from being dunked in inkwells, who had a thing about explosive chemical reactions and was responsible for replenishing the cache of sodium up at the hideout, smuggling the stuff out of the Mingeborough High School lab with the connivance of her boyfriend Gaylord, an infatuated sophomore shot-putter who just liked them young; Hogan Slothrop, the doctor's kid, who at the age of eight had taken to serious after-bedtime beer-drinking and at the age of nine got religion, swore off beer and joined the Alcoholics Anonymous, a step his father, who was what is known as permissive, gave his blessing to and which the local A.A. group tolerated because they thought having a kid around would be inspirational; Nunzi Passarella, who had begun his career in second grade by bringing somehow a full-grown pig in to Show-and-Tell Time, a quarter-ton Poland China sow, in the school bus and everything, and had gone on to found a Crazy Sue Dunham cult, in honor of that legendary and beautiful drifter who last century had roamed all this hilltop country exchanging babies and setting fires and who, in a way, was the patron saint of all these kids.

"Where's Carl?" Tim said after drying his head on one of Grover's sweat shirts.

"Down cellar," Grover said, "fooling with the rhinoceros feet." Which you could wear like shoes and which would be worn so come the first snowfall. "What's the matter?"

"My mother's been"—he had a hard time saying it because you were not supposed to tell on your mother—"bothering people. Again."

"Bothering Carl's folks?"

Tim nodded.

Grover frowned. "My mother has, too. I hear them talking about it, you know"—waving a thumb at a pair of earphones running in a direct line off a bug he'd had planted for a year in his parents' bedroom—"it's called the race issue. For a long time I thought they meant a real race, cars or something."

"And she used that word again," Tim said. At which point Carl came in, without the rhinoceros feet, smiling and quiet, as if he'd had some kind of a bug on Grover's room too and knew what they'd been talking about.

"You want to listen?" Grover said, nodding at the ham equipment. "I had New York for a minute."

Carl said yeah, went over and put on the earphones and started tuning.

"Here's Étienne," said Tim. The fat boy hovered at the window like a slick balloon. He had grease on his face and was making cross-eyes. They let him in. "I got something you'll get a real bang out of," Étienne said.

"What?" said Tim, who was still half thinking about his mother and was not too alert.

"This," said Étienne, and socked him with a paper bag full of rain water he'd been hiding in his shirt. Tim grabbed him and they wrestled around, Grover yelling at them to be careful of the radio gear, Carl lifting his feet and laughing whenever they rolled close. When they quit, Carl took off the earphones and hit the power switch and Grovie went to sit cross-legged on the bed, which meant the Inner Junta was in session.

"Progress reports first, I think," said Grover. "What have you got this week, Étienne?" He had this clipboard he always would snap the clip of rhythmically whenever he was thinking hard.

Étienne took out some papers he had folded in his back pocket and read, "Railroad. One new lantern, two torpedoes added to the arsenic."

"Arsenal," muttered Grover, writing on the clipboard.

"Yeah. Me and Kermie went out and did another count on cars at points Foxtrot and Quebec. Foxtrot showed seventeen cars, three trucks between four-thirty and ——"

"I'll take the figures later," Grover said. "Can we do anything in that cut, on that stretch of track, then, or do too many cars come by up on the road?—that's the point."

"Oh," said Étienne. "Well, it was pretty heavy traffic, Grovie." He stuck his teeth out and did slant-eyes at Carl and Tim, who started laughing.

"Can you get out any later?" Grover said irritably. "Later at night, say about nine?"

"I don't know," said Étienne. "I'd have to sneak out and ——"

"Well, sneak out," Grover said. "We need figures for the night, too."

"But he—he worries about me," Étienne said, "he really does."

Grover frowned at his clipboard, snapped the clip a couple of times, and said, "Well, how about the school? Anything on that?"

"I have a couple of more little kids lined up," Étienne said, "first-graders. They're always getting yelled at. They throw chalk. They throw anything. One of them has a real good arm, Grovie. We'd have to drill them a little with the sodium. That might be a problem."

Grover looked up. "Problem?"

"They might try to eat it or something. One of them"—giggling—"chews chalk. He says it tastes good."

"Well," said Grover, "keep looking. We need somebody, Étienne. It's a very vital area. We're going to *have* to demolish that boys' latrine. It's symmetry we're after."

"Cemetery?" said Tim, squinting his eyes and wrinkling his nose. "What do you want the cemetery for, Grovie?"

Grover explained the word to him. Sketched a rough plan view of the school building with chalk on his greenboard on the wall. "Symmetry and timing," he yelled, "coordination."

"That's on my report card," said Étienne, "that word."

"Right," said Grover. "It means your arms and legs and head all work together in gym, and it's the same for us, in this thing, for a gang like ours, as it is for the parts of your body," but they'd quit listening. Étienne was pulling his mouth wide; Tim and Carl were taking turns socking each other in the arm. Grover snapped his clipboard real loud at them and they quit fooling around. "Étienne, anything more?"

"That's all. Oh, the PTA meeting Tuesday. I think I'll send Hogan again."

"You remember last time," Grover said with an effort, "what he did." The original idea had been that Hogan Slothrop would make a better infiltrator into the PTA meetings because of his experience with Alcoholics Anonymous, Grover's assumption being that Hogan knew most about the kinds of meetings grownups had. It was another miscalculation. It bothered Grover for a week that he'd judged things so wrong. What Hogan had tried to do, instead of just sit quiet, out of sight, taking notes, was horn in on one meeting. "I mean," said Hogan, "I didn't see any harm in raising my hand, you know, and saying, 'My name is Hogan Slothrop, I am a school kid,' and then telling them what it was like."

"They don't want to know," said Grover.

"My mother does," Hogan said. "She asks me every day what I did in school, and I tell her."

"She doesn't listen," said Grover. They had thrown Hogan Slothrop out of the PTA meeting about the time he started up front to the podium to see if they'd let him recite the A.A.'s Twelve Steps. Literally threw him out—he was light and easy to lift.

"Why?" Grover screamed.

"There are meetings," Hogan tried to explain, "and meetings. The PTA does it all different. They have these rules, or something, and everybody is more, more . . ."

"Formal," suggested Grover. "Official."

"Like they're playing some game, a new one I never heard of before," Hogan said. "At the A.A. we just talk."

Next PTA meeting Kim Dufay put on lipstick, did her hair in a French twist, dolled up in her most sophisticated clothes and a size 28A padded bra she'd conned her mother into buying her, and went in and did a pretty good job of passing. So she'd become the new infiltrator.

"And now," Étienne summarized, "Hogan feels bad about being replaced by a girl."

"I like Hogan," Grover said, "don't get me wrong, fellas. But can he function well in a highly structured situation, that's what I ——"

"Wha?" said Tim and Carl in unison. It was a bit they'd worked up between them and it neve. failed to confound

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

"Dad, Bobby says you're too cheap to raise my allowance, and I say you ain't."

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Grover. Grover shrugged, admitted there might be a morale problem and told Étienne OK, Hogan could try it again. Tim's report was next. His area of concern was money and drilling. At the moment everybody was occupied with the yearly dry run coming up. The code name for it was Operation Spartacus, which Grover had taken from the movie of the same name, having gone all the way over to Stockbridge one time to see it and been so impressed that for the month following he couldn't go by a mirror without making a Kirk Douglas face at himself in it. This would be the third year for Spartacus, the third dry run for the real uprising of the slaves, referred to only as Operation A. "What's the A for?" Tim had asked once. "Abattoir," Grover answered with a funny look. "Armageddon." "Show-off," Tim said, and forgot it. You didn't have to know what initials meant to drill kids.

"How's it shaping up, Tim?" asked Grover.

Tim wasn't too enthusiastic. "Without a good mock-up, Grovie, it just won't be worth much."

"Just to recap for the others now, Tim," Grover said, writing on the clipboard, "we're handling it more or less the same as last year, right?"

"Right. Using Fazzo's Field again and laying it down"—pointing at the sketch on the greenboard—"full size. But we're using the little stakes and red flags that Étienne got from the road crew this year instead of the lime." Last year too many little kids had been doing just great up until they got to the white outline of the school building, then they'd stopped short and stood around scuffing it into the grass with their shoes. In the critique held later Grover advanced the theory that the line figure in the grass might have reminded the little kids of chalk lines on a greenboard. With the lime there'd also been the problem of getting the thing erased when Spartacus was over. But stakes, them you could just pull up. Stakes were better.

"But not," said Tim, "still not as good as real walls. Even beaver board ones. Running across a line, making believe it's a door, that's one thing. But you need the door itself. You need real stairs, and real toilets to throw the sodium in, you know?"

"But two years ago you didn't feel that way," Grover pointed out.

Tim shrugged. "It just isn't that real any more. For me. How do we know, when it's time, zero hour, that they'll do it the same way? Especially the little kids?"

"We don't," said Grover. "But we can't afford to build any real elaborate mock-up."

"We have about twenty-five bucks," Tim said. "They're really starting to come through with their milk money now, even some of the ones who, it isn't their turn, you know?"

Grover gave him a lidded look. "You been strong-arming them, Tim? I don't need any of that."

"No, Grovie, I swear, they're all doing it on their own. They say—a couple kids did—that they *believe* in us. Some of them don't like milk anyway, so they don't mind passing it up."

"Just see that they don't get too enthusiastic," Grover said. "The teachers might catch on. The idea is to have a more or less constant milk count every day, to rotate it, very gradually, very quietly. The daily take may be small that way but it's steady. You start getting these wild fluctuations, everybody handing you nickels at once, they'll get suspicious. Go easy. How's the other income? How's our fence in Pittsfield?"

"He wants furniture now," Tim said. "That's a problem. We can get furniture, from the Velour estate, from the Rosenzweig place, from two or three others. But how do we carry it to Pittsfield? We can't. And he's also quit accepting collect calls."

"Gah," said Grover, "then we might as well cross him off too. See? You can't trust them. They start going cheap on you and that means they don't want you around any more."

"Uh, how about," Tim put in, trying to keep Grover from getting started, "you know, that mock-up?"

"No, no," Grover said. "We need that money for other things." Tim flopped back on the rug and looked at the ceiling. "That's all, Tim? OK, Carl now. How's it going up the development?"

Carl was their organizer for all Northumberland Estates, the new part of Mingeborough. The old town would be easy enough to handle when it was time, but this development shopping center with its supermarket and bright new drugstore that sold Halloween masks, and parking lot always full of cars, even late into the night, bothered them. While it was being put up, the summer before last, Tim and Étienne used to go there evenings and play king-of-the-mountain on the piles of fill till it was dark; then they'd steal lumber, drain the gas tanks of graders and bulldozers, even bust a few windows if the peepers and frogs in Corrody's Swamp down the hill were singing loud enough. The kids didn't like the development much, didn't like it being called "estates" when each lot was only fifty by a hundred feet, nowhere near the size of the old Gilded Age estates, real ones, that surrounded the old town the way creatures in dreams surround your bed, higher and hidden but always there. Like Grover's house, the Big Houses of the estates also had faces, but without such plain, gambreled honesty: Instead there were mysterious deep eyes fringed in gimcrackery and wrought-iron masks, cheeks tattooed in flowered tiles, great portcullised mouths with rows of dead palm trees for teeth, and to visit one of them was like reentering sleep, and the loot you came away with did not ever seem that real; whether you kept it to furnish the hideout with, or sold it to a fence like this antique shop in Pittsfield, it was the spoils of dream. But there was nothing about the little, low-rambling, more or less identical homes of Northumberland Estates to interest or to haunt, no chance of loot that would be any more than the ordinary, waking-world kind the cops hauled you in for taking; no small immunities, no possibilities for hidden life or otherworldly presence; no trees, secret routes, shortcuts, culverts, thickets that could be made hollow in the middle—everything in the place was out in the open, everything could be seen at a glance; and behind it, under it, around the corners of its houses and down the safe, gentle curves of its streets, you came back, you kept coming back, to nothing; nothing but the cheerless earth. Carl was one of the few kids who lived there that the old-town kids could get along with. It was his job to drum up support, to win new converts, to scout out any strategic importance there might be to crossroads, stores, things like that. It wasn't a job the others envied him.

"There've been these phone calls," Carl mentioned, after he'd given a rundown on how his week had gone. "Practical jokers." He told some of the things they'd said.

"Jokes," Étienne said. "What's so funny? Call somebody up, call them names, that isn't a joke. It doesn't make any sense at all."

"What about it, Carl?" Grover wanted to know. "Think they suspect anything? Think they caught on what we're up to?"

Carl smiled and so they knew what he was going to say. "No, it's safe. Still safe."

"Then why the phone calls?" Grover said. "If not Operation A, then what?"

Carl shrugged and sat watching them, as if he knew what, knew everything, secrets none of them had even guessed at. As if there were after all some heart-in-hiding, some crypt to Northumberland Estates that had so far managed to elude the rest of them, and which Carl would only someday tell them about, as reward for their having been more ingenious in their scheming, or braver in facing up to their parents, or smarter in school, or maybe better in some way they hadn't yet considered but which Carl would let them know about when he was ready, through hints, funny stories, apparently casual changes of subject.

"End of the meeting," Grover announced. "Let's go over to the hideout."

The rain had fallen away to a sort of drifting mist. The four of them scrambled down the tree and ran out of Grover's yard, down the block, into and across a field among rain-flattened holidays of hay. Somewhere en route they picked up a fat basset hound named Pierre, who on sunny days slept in the middle of the state highway that briefly became Chickadee Street as it passed through Mingeborough. But rain did something to him, invigorated him. He romped around them like a puppy, yapping and trying, it looked like, to catch raindrops on his tongue.

The sun would set tonight without anyone's seeing it—there was that kind of bleakness to the afternoon. You couldn't see any mountains because the clouds trailed too low. Tim, Grover, Étienne, Carl and Pierre went flickering over the field like shadows, out to a dirt road whose ruts were filled with rain now. The road wound down a little ridge into King Yrjö's woods, named after a European pretender who'd fled the eclipse then falling over Europe and his own hardly real shadow-state sometime back in the middle Thirties, trading a bucketful of jewels, the yarn went, for all this property. Why it had to be a bucketful, which sounded like an impractical way to carry jewels around, nobody ever explained. There were also supposed to have been three (some said four) wives, one official and the others morganatic, and a fiercely loyal aide, a cavalry officer seven feet tall with a full beard, spurred boots, gold epaulets and a shotgun he always carried with him and would not hesitate to use on anybody, especially a kid, caught trespassing. It was he who haunted the grounds. He still lived there though his king had long gone—at least, everybody believed he did—though no one had ever seen him outright, only heard his heavy boots crashing after you through the dead leaves, among the tree trunks and briers, as you ran in panic. You always got away. The king's exile, kids could sense, was something their parents were in on but was effectively cut off from the kids: There had been the falling dark, yes, and general flight, and a large war—all this without names and dates, pieced together out of talk overheard from parents, television documentaries, social-studies class if you happened to be listening, marines-in-action comics, but none of it that sharp, that specific; all of it in a kind of code, twilit, forever unexplained. King Yrjö's estate was the only real connection the kids had with whatever the cataclysmic thing was that had happened, and it helped for the caretaker, the pursuer, to have been a soldier.

Yet he had not bothered the Inner Junta at all. Years ago, somehow, it had become clear to only them that he never would. They'd since been all over the place and had seen no definite trace of

Can I keep him, Mom?

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him, though plenty of ambiguous ones. Which didn't disprove his existence, but did mean that they'd found the perfect place for a hideout. Real or make-believe, the giant cavalryman became their protector.

The road passed through a stand of pines, high in whose branches partridges whirred. Water dripped; shoes squished in the mud. After the trees came a sweep of what had once been smooth lawn, smooth as the back of a long wave out at sea, but now was full of weeds, rabbit holes, tall rye. According to Tim's father, years ago peacocks had come running downhill across the great lawn whenever a carriage had entered this stretch of the road, spreading out their brilliant tails. "Oh, yeah," Tim said, "like just before a program comes on in color. When are we getting a color TV, Dad?"

"Black and white's good enough," his father had said, and that was that. Tim had asked Carl once whether he had a color TV at home. "Why should I?" said Carl, and then almost immediately, "Oh! yeah." And bust out laughing. Tim knew as well as Étienne, the professional comic, when your listener had guessed your next line, so he didn't say anything else. He wondered why Carl laughed so hard. It wasn't that funny and even had a kind of logic to it. He did think of Carl as not only "colored" himself, but somehow more deeply involved with *all* color. When Tim thought about Carl he always saw him against blazing reds and ochres of this early fall, only last month, when Carl had just come to Mingeborough and they were still getting to be friends, and he thought that Carl must somehow carry around with him a perpetual Berkshire autumn, a Wonderful World of Color. Even in the grayness of this afternoon and this district they had entered (which, it seemed, was deprived of its just measure of light because part of it belonged to the past), Carl brought a kind of illumination, a brightening, a compensation for whatever it was about the light that was missing.

They left the road and plunged down through azalea bushes to the banks of an ornamental canal, part of a system of waterways and islands laid out toward the end of the last century, perhaps with some idea of a miniaturized or toy Venice for the New York candy magnate Ellsworth Baffy, who had caused this place to be built originally. Like many who put castles up among these inland hills, he was a contemporary of Jay Gould and his partner, the jolly Berkshire peddler Jubilee Jim Fisk. Once, right around this time of year, Baffy had held a masquerade ball in honor of the presidential candidate James G. Blaine, from which Blaine had been absent due to a storm and a mix-up in rail schedules. No one missed him. All the moneyed of Berkshire County congregated in the great ballroom of Baffy's spun-sugar manor house; the party lasted three days and the countryside was visited by the drunken wanderings of Pierrots pale in the light of the moon, hideous Borneo apes toting jugs of the local white lightning, lush and cherry-lipped actresses imported from New York, in silk capes, red corsets, long hose; wild Indians, princes of the Renaissance, characters from Dickens, paisley bulls, bears with nosegays; allegorical, garlanded girls named Free Enterprise, Progress, Enlightenment; a giant Maine lobster that never got to extend its claw to the candidate. It snowed, and the last morning of the party a pretty ballet girl dressed as Columbine was found in a quarry nearly dead; the toes of one foot were frostbitten so badly they had to be amputated. She never danced again, and in November Blaine lost the election and was also forgotten. After Baffy died the estate was bought by a retired train robber from Kansas and in 1932 was sold dirt cheap to a chain of hotels which couldn't afford to convert the place and eventually decided that King Yrjö's bucketful of jewels was better than paying the taxes on a white elephant. And now the King too was gone, and the house was empty again, except for the Junta, and one possible cavalry officer.

Hidden among reeds was a flat-bottomed boat they'd found, patched up, and christened the *S.S. Leak*. They piled aboard, and Tim and Étienne rowed. Pierre sat with his paws up on the front end, like a figurehead. Downstream a frog jumped, and falling rain stippled the dark surface of the water. They splashed along under phony-Venetian bridges, some without floorboards so that you could look up and see the gray sky through them; past little landings whose untarred pilings had rotted and collected green slime; an open summerhouse with screening rusted through, which swayed even in soft winds; corroded statues of straight-nosed, fig-leaved youths and maidens, holding horns of plenty, crossbows, impossible Panpipes and stringed instruments, pomegranates, curling scrolls, and one another. Soon, over the tops of leafless willows, the Big House appeared, growing taller the closer they came—more turrets, crenelations, flying buttresses coming into sight at each stroke of the oars. The outside was in fairly lousy shape: a lot of shingling was off, paint had peeled, roof slates lay broken in piles where they'd slid and fallen. Windows had been mostly busted after years of forays by nervous kids double-dared to go in against the cavalry officer and his shotgun. And everywhere the smell of old—eighty-year-old—wood.

They tied the boat to an iron ring sunk in a kind of promenade, went ashore, and trooped around to a side entrance of the Big House. No matter how often they came to the hideout there was a feeling of ceremony, more than any of trespass, about going into the house: It took an effort to step from outside to inside. The inside was full of a pressure, an odor, that resisted intrusions, that kept them conscious of itself until they left again. None of them would go so far as to call it by any name, but they all knew it was there. Part of the ceremony was to look at one another and grin, embarrassed, before pushing on into the twilight that waited for them.

They skirted the edges of the room they'd entered, because hung right in the middle of the ceiling was a cobwebbed, flint-glass chandelier with dust piled in thick stalagmites on its upper facets, and they knew what would happen if you walked under it. The house was full of such mute injunctions: blind places you could be jumped out at from; stretches of warped floor that might suddenly open downward into dungeons or simple darknesses with nothing nearby to grab onto; doors that would not stay open behind you but were balanced to close quietly, unless you watched them. These places it was better to stay away from. The route to the hideout was thus like the way into reefed and perilous harbor. If there had been more than four going in, there would have been no danger at all; it would have been just a mob of kids running through an old house. If there had been fewer, it would have been impossible to get beyond the first room.

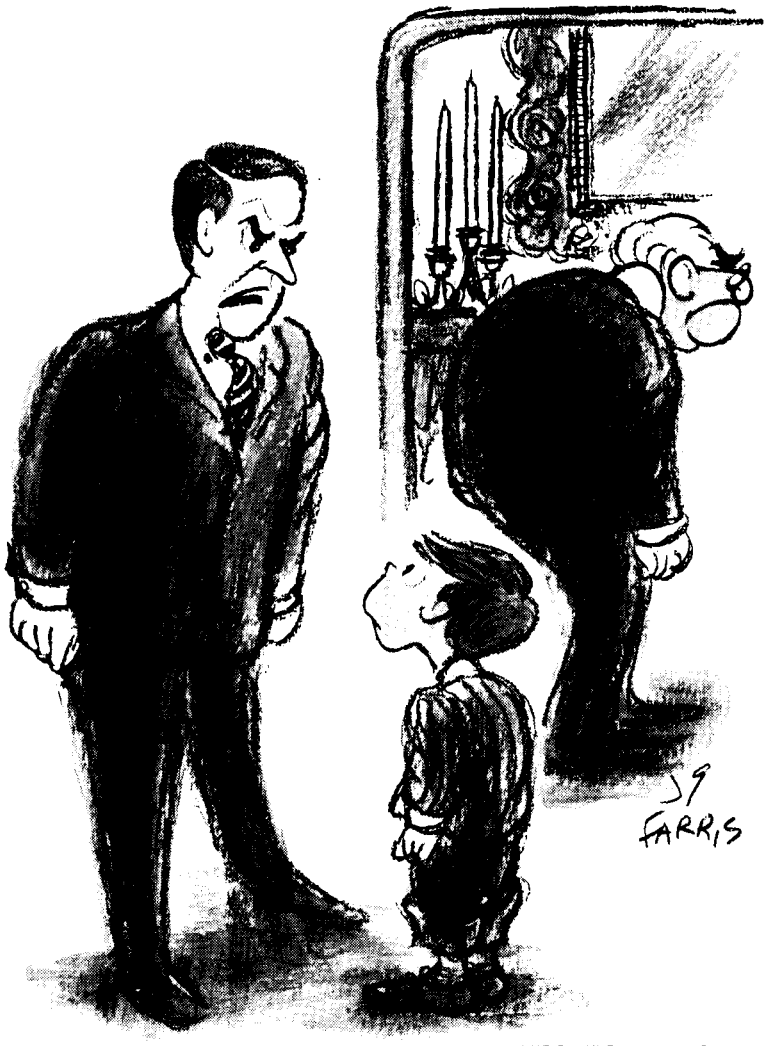
Creaking, or echoing, or left as dark-ribbed sneaker-prints in a fine layer of damp, the footsteps of the Junta carried them on into King Yrjö's, house, past pier glasses that gave them back their images dark and faded, as if some part were being kept as the price of admission; through doorways where old velvet hung whose pile was worn away into maplike patterns, seas and land masses taught in no geography their schools knew; through the scullery, where they'd found a decades-old case of Moxie, of which there were still nine bottles left, Kim Dufay having busted one over the prow of the *S.S. Leak* at its christening, the other two drunk solemnly to celebrate last year's more or less successful Spartacus maneuvers and recently Carl Barrington's membership in the gang; then downstairs, between rows of empty wine racks, into empty utility rooms with empty workbenches and dead electric outlets dangling from overhead in the dark like armless spiders; at last to the house's most secret core, the room behind the ancient coal furnace that they'd found and fixed up and Etienne had spent a week booby-trapping. This is where they met and drew up the timetables; this is where they kept the sodium under kerosene in a five-gallon can; and the maps with the objectives marked on them, in an old roll-top desk they'd found empty; and the list of public enemies, which no one but Grover had access to.

So the afternoon got darker, the rain came and went in gusts, sometimes thickening to a downpour, then easing off to a drizzle, and deep in the house, in the dry, cold room, the Junta plotted. Their plot had been going on now for three years, and it reminded Tim sometimes of dreams you got when you were sick and feverish, where there was something you had been told to do—find somebody important in an endless strange city full of faces and clues; struggle down the long, inexhaustible network of some arithmetic problem where each step led to a dozen new ones. Nothing ever seemed to change; no "objectives" were taken that didn't create a need to start thinking about new ones, so that soon the old ones were forgotten and let slip by default back into the hands of grownups or into a public no man's land again, and you would be back where you'd started. So what if Étienne (to take a major example) had managed to stop the paper mill last year for almost a week by messing up the water it used? Other things kept on, as if there were something basically wrong and self-defeating with the plot itself. Hogan Slothrop was supposed to have planted a smoke bomb in a PTA meeting the same evening, smoke them out and make off with all their minutes and financial statements, but he'd got a sudden call to go sit with another A.A. member, a stranger in town who had called the local chapter because he was in trouble and afraid.

"What's he afraid of?" Tim had wanted to know.

It had been a year before, in the early fall, a little past the opening of school. Hogan had come over to Tim's house right after supper, and the sky was still light, though the sun was down, and they had been out in Tim's back yard shooting baskets. Or Tim was: Hogan had had this conflict of commitments on his mind.

"Afraid he'll start drinking again," Hogan said, answering Tim's question.



THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

"I'll tell you why I'm cutting off your allowance—because your grandfather cut off mine!"

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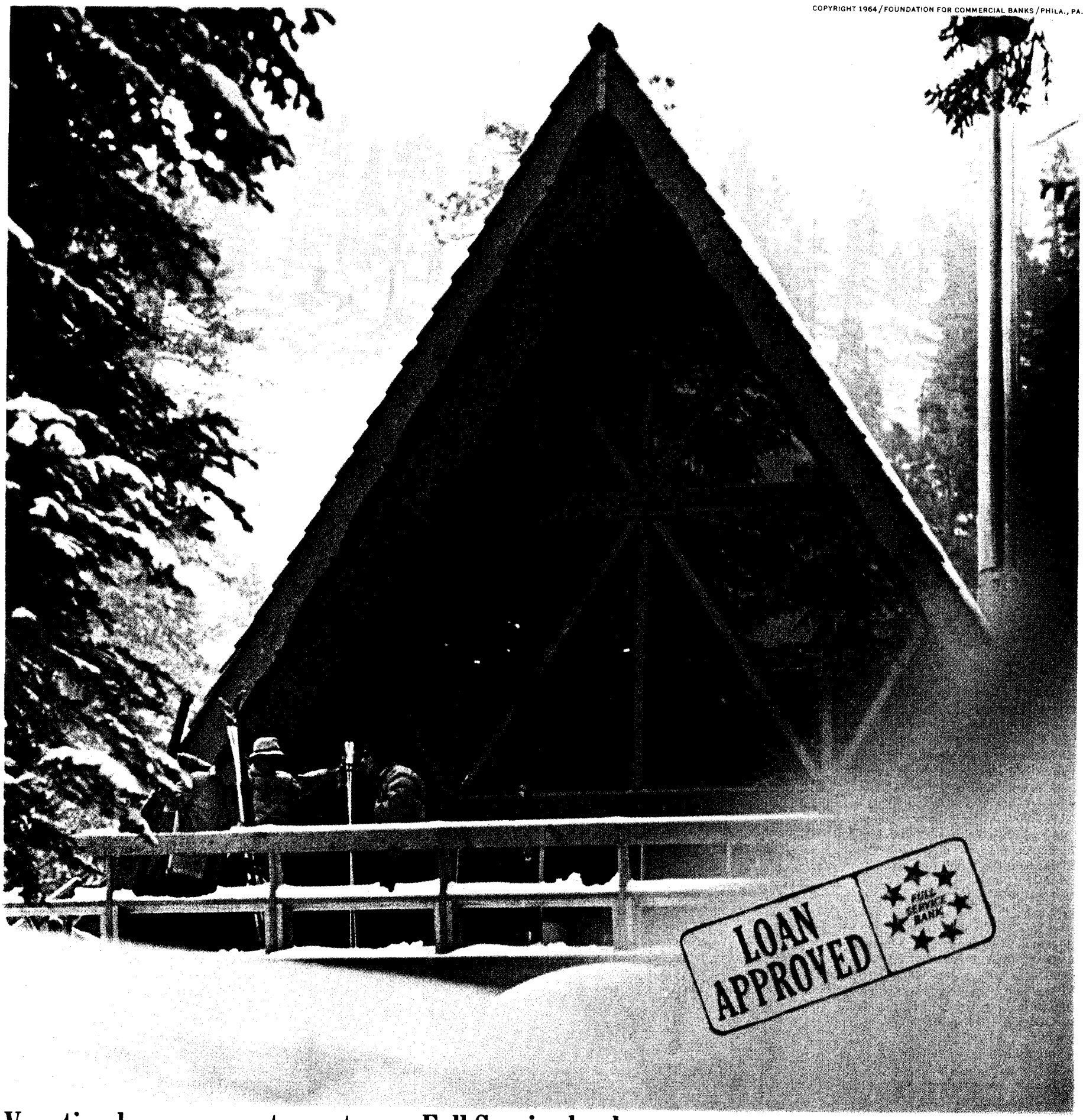

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"I'm taking this along"—holding up a carton of milk. "If he wants to drink, he can drink this instead."

"Gah," said Tim, who didn't think much of milk.

"Listen," said Hogan, "you never outgrow your need for milk. Let me tell you about milk. How great it is."

"Tell me about beer," Tim said. Being lately fascinated with the idea of getting drunk.

Hogan took offense. "Don't make fun," he said. "I'm lucky I went through that when I did, that's what my father says. Look at this guy I got to go sit with. He's thirty-seven years old. Look at what a head start I got on him."

"You're supposed to plant that smoke bomb tonight," Tim said.

"Come on, Tim, you can do it for me, can't you?"

"Me and Grovie were going to go throw sodium," Tim said. "Remember? It's all got to come off at the same time."

"Well, then, tell Grovie I can't make it," Hogan said. "I'm sorry, Tim, I just can't." At about which point—wouldn't you know?—Grover showed up. They explained to him as diplomatically as they could—which, as usual, wasn't good enough, because Grover flew into a full-scale snit, called them both an assortment of names and stalked off into the darkness which had crept down off the mountains so slow and shifty they hadn't noticed.

"Looks like no sodium-throwing," ventured Hogan, after a while, "huh, Tim?"

"Yeah," said Tim. That's how it always was. Things never went off the way they should've; nothing progressed. Étienne had played frogman that day for nothing, nothing but laughs. The paper mill would start up again, people would go back to work, the insecurity and discontent Grover needed and had counted on for dark reasons he never confided would vanish, and everything would be the way it was.

"Uh come on, Tim," Hogan suggested in his Yogi Bear voice, which he used for cheering people up, "uh why don't you ride down to the hotel, uh and help me sit with this guy?"

"That where he is?" Tim said. Hoge said yeah, the guy was just passing through, and for some reason nobody else wanted to go. Nancy, the secretary at the central A.A. office, had telephoned Hogan as a last resort. When he said OK, she said, "He'll go," to somebody in the office with her, and Hogan heard what sounded like a couple of people laughing.

Tim got his bike, yelled into the house that he'd be back, and they pedaled downhill through the gathering evening and then coasted into the town. It was good fall weather, a borderline time when some trees have jumped the gun and started to change color, and the insects get louder as the days pass, and some mornings, when the wind is out of the Northwest, you can look over, on the way to school, at the higher mountains and make out a few lonely hawks beginning to drift on South, following the crests of the ridges. In spite of all that day's pointlessness, Tim could still enjoy the feeling of coasting down toward the yellow clusters of lights, leaving behind two pages of arithmetic homework and a chapter of science he was supposed to read, not to mention a lousy movie, some romantic comedy dating from the 1940's which was on the only channel you could get up here. As Tim and Hogan zoomed by houses with doors and windows still open for the dark's first coolness they could glimpse the bluish fluorescence of screens, all tuned to the same movie, and pick up snatches of dialogue: " . . . Private, have you gone completely out of your . . ."; ". . . I mean, there *was* a girl back home . . ."; ". . . (splash, comical yell) Oh, sorry, sir, thought you were a Jap infiltrator . . ."; "*How* can I be a Jap infiltrator when we're five thousand . . ."; "I'll wait, Bill, I'll wait for you as long as . . ." and on down, past the firehouse, where a few big kids were sitting around on the old La France engine, telling jokes and smoking, and by the candy store, which neither Tim nor Hogan felt like stopping in tonight, and all of a sudden there were parking meters and several blocks of diagonal parking, which meant you had to put on your brakes and keep an eye out for the traffic. By the time they got to the hotel the night had completely come, had set down on Mingeborough like a lid on a pot, and the stores had begun to close up.

They parked their bikes and went into the lobby. The night clerk, who'd just come on, gave them the fishy eye. "Alcoholics Anonymous?" he said. "You're kidding."

"I swear," said Hogan, showing him the carton of milk. "Call him up. Mr. McAfee, room 217." The clerk, who had the empty night facing him, rang the room and talked to Mr. McAfee. He had a funny look when he hung up.

"Well, it sounds like it's a nigger up there," he informed them.

"Can we go up?" Hogan asked.

The clerk shrugged. "He says he's expecting you. If you have any—you know—trouble, just knock his phone off the hook. See, it'll buzz down here."

"Sure," said Hogan. They went through the empty lobby, between facing rows of armchairs, and got in the elevator. Mr. McAfee was on the second floor. Tim and Hogan looked at each other on the way up but didn't say anything. At his door they knocked for a while before he'd answer. He wasn't much taller than they were. He was a Negro with a small moustache, wearing a gray cardigan and smoking.

"I thought he was kidding," said Mr. McAfee. "You guys really from the A.A.?"

"*He* is," Tim said.

Then something seemed to happen to Mr. McAfee's face. "Oh," he said. "Well, that's pretty funny. They almost as funny up here as they are in Mississippi. OK, you done your bit now? You can go."

"I thought you wanted help," Hogan said, looking puzzled.

Mr. McAfee stood aside. "You're right about that. Yeah. You really want to come in?" He looked like he didn't care. They went in, and Hogan put his milk on the little writing desk in the corner. It was the first time either of them had been in any of the hotel's rooms or spoken to anybody colored.

Mr. McAfee was a bass player, but without his instrument. He'd been over in Lenox at some music festival. He had no idea how he'd got over here.

"It happens sometimes," he said. "I get these blank periods. One minute I was in Lenox. Next thing I know, I show up in—what do you call it?—Mingeborough. That ever happen to you?"

"No," said Hoge. "The worst I ever got was sick."

"You off it now. Alcohol."

"Forever," Hogan said. "Now it's strictly milk."

"Well, that makes you a milko, man," said Mr. McAfee, with a wan smile.

"What am I supposed to do," said Hogan, "exactly?"

"Oh, talk," said Mr. McAfee. "Or I'll talk. Till I can get to sleep. Or somebody—Jill—can get here, come get me, you know?"

"Is that your wife?" Tim said.

"That's who went up the hill with Jack," Mr. McAfee said, and he laughed a little. "No, no kidding, that really happened."

"You want to talk about that?" Hogan said.

"No. I guess not."

So, instead, Tim and Hogan told Mr. McAfee about things like school, and the town, and what their parents did for a living; but soon, because they trusted him, they were also telling him the more secret things—Étienne messing up the paper mill, and the hideout, and the sodium stockpile.

"Yeah," cried Mr. McAfee, "that sodium. I remember. I threw some in a toilet once—flushed the handle first, you know, then dropped in that sodium. Soon as it hit the water down there, *wham!* That was in Beaumount, Texas, where I used to live. School principal comes walking in the room, very straight face, holding a busted piece of a toilet bowl, like this, and he says, 'Which one of you gentlemen—is responsible—for this outrage?' "

Hogan and Tim, giggling, told him about the time Étienne had sat up in a tree with a slingshot, shooting little pea-size sodium balls into the swimming pool at one of the estates during a cocktail party, and the way people scattered at the first explosions.

"Very fancy crowd you run with, there," said Mr. McAfee. "Estates and everything."

"Not us," Tim said. "We just sneak in at night, and swim in the pools then. The one up at Lovelace's estate is the nicest. You want to go there? It's warm enough."

"Yeah," said Hoge. "We could go there now. Come on."

"Well, you know," Mr. McAfee said. He looked embarrassed.

"Why not?" Hoge said.

"Well, you guys should be old enough to know why not," Mr. McAfee said, starting to get mad. He looked at their faces and then shook his head and said, even angrier, "I get caught and that's it, baby. I mean that's all."

"Nobody ever gets caught," Hogan said, trying to reassure him.

Mr. McAfee lay down on the bed and looked at the ceiling. "If they're the right color, nobody gets caught," he said quietly, but the kids heard him.

"So you're a better color than we are," Tim said, "for getting away at night. You're bigger and faster. If we can do it you can, Mr. McAfee, no kidding."

Mr. McAfee looked over at them. He lit another cigarette from the butt of the one he was smoking, never taking his eyes off the two kids. It was hard to tell what he was thinking. "Maybe later," he said after he'd squashed out the old cigarette. "Tell you why I'm nervous about that. It's the water in that pool, see. If you any kind of an alky, it can have a funny effect on you. Ever have that happen, Hogan?" Hogan shook his head no. "Well, I did once, while I was in the Army."

"Were you in during World War II?" Tim asked. "Fighting the Japanese or anything?"

"No, I missed that," Mr. McAfee said. "I was too young."

"We missed it too," Hogan told him.

"No, I was in during Korea. Only I stayed Stateside all through it. I was in this band—Army band, you know—at Fort Ord, California. All around there, up in the hills around Monterey, you have these little bars; anybody can just walk in, if they want to, and start playing. You have a lot of union guys, used to play around L.A.—you know—they get drafted and sent to Ord. Guys been in studio bands, most of them, so you're sitting in with some fine talent, a lot of times. One night we're in this kind of a roadhouse, four of us, and we're playing, and it's sounding pretty good. We're all juiced a little, drinking wine, there's a lot of wine—you know—from over in that valley there,

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

"Don't be a jerk—get into sales."

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whatever you call it. We just drinking wine and doing some—oh, some blues or something– an I this lady comes in. White lady. Kind that sits out by the swimming pool and drinks cocktails at cocktail parties—right?—yeah. You got it. She's a very stout lady, not big fat, just stout, and she says she wants us to come play at a party she's having. So it's like a Tuesday or a Wednesday and we all kind of curious as to how *come* she's having a party such a funny time of the week, well she says it's been going on since the weekend—nonstop, you know—and we come to find out when we get there she's not putting *no*body on, man. There it is—whooping, hollering, you can hear it for a mile. This baritone sax, some Italian kid, Sheldon somebody, he not halfway in the door there's two or three little chicks all over him, telling him—well, never mind about that—but we set up and get going, and the juice keeps coming on like a bucket brigade, people keep handing it up to you. You know what it is? Champagne. Solid champagne. All night long we drink this stuff, and about the time the sun comes up everybody's passed out, and we quit playing. I lay down next to the drums and go to sleep. Next thing I know I hear this girl, and she's laughing. I get up, the sun's in my eyes, it's only about nine or ten in the morning. I ought to feel horrible, man, but I feel great. I go walking out on this kind of little terrace, it's cold and outside there's fog, not all the way down to the ground, just hiding the tops of the trees, pine trees I guess, the trunks are these—you know—very straight. There's this white fog and downhill there's the ocean, Pacific Ocean, and from up the coast you can even hear that artillery practice back at Ord, wrapped up in the fog, *whoomp*, *whoomp*. That's how quiet it is. I go on out by the swimming pool, still wondering about this chick I heard laughing, all of a sudden here comes old Sheldon, running out around a corner, with this girl chasing him, and he slams into me, and the girl can't stop in time neither, and we all three of us fall in the pool with all our clothes on. And all I had to do was swallow a little bit of that water and you know what? I'm high all over again, just as high as I was during the night, on all that champagne. How about that?"

"It sounds great," Hogan said. "Except for the alcohol part of it, I mean."

"Yeah, it was great," said Mr. McAfee. "It's the only morning I remember that ever was." He didn't say anything for a while. Then the telephone rang. It was for Tim.

"Hey," said Grover on the other end, "can we come over there? Étienne needs a place to hide tonight." Having, it seems, got second thoughts about his attack on the paper mill earlier that day. It was dawning on him that he'd done something serious, and that the cops, if they got hold of him, would find out about other jobs he'd pulled, and be merciless. Grover's house would be the first place they'd think of to look. It would have to be someplace like the hotel if he wanted to stand a chance of escaping the dragnet. Tim asked Mr. McAfee, who said he guessed so, but reluctant.

"Don't worry," Hogan said. "Étienne's just scared. Like you are."

"Don't you ever get scared?" said Mr. McAfee. His voice had gone funny.

"Not about alcohol," said Hogan. "I guess I was never really that bad."

"Oh, you just passing. I see." He lay still on the bed, his face very black against the pillow. Tim realized that Mr. McAfee had been sweating a lot. It was running off the sides of his neck and soaking into the pillowcase. He looked sick.

"Can I get you anything?" Tim asked, a little worried. When the man didn't answer, he repeated it.

"Just a drink," Mr. McAfee stage-whispered, pointing at Hogan. "See if you can talk your buddy there into letting me have something to relax with. No kidding, I really need something now."

"You can't," Hogan said. "That's the whole point. That's what I'm here for."

"You think that's what you're here for? You wrong." He stood up slowly, as if his stomach or something hurt, and picked up the telephone. "Can you send up a bottle, a fifth, of Jim Beam," he said, "and"—making an elaborate count of the people in the room—"three glasses? Oh. Right. OK, only one glass. Oh, there is one glass already here." He hung up. "Cat don't miss a trick," he said. "They right on the ball in Mingeborough, Mass."

"Listen, what did you call us up for?" Hogan said. He was talking in an obstinate, rhythmic way that meant he was going to bust out crying any minute. "Why did you get in touch with the A.A. at all, if you were just going to get drunk anyway?"

"I needed help," explained Mr. McAfee, "and I thought they would help me. And they really helped, didn't they? Look at what they sent me."

"Hey," said Tim, and Hogan started to cry.

"OK," said Mr. McAfee. "Out, you guys. Go on home."

Hogan quit crying and got stubborn. "I'm staying."

"The hell you are. Go on. You're the big jokers in town, now you ought to know a joke when you see one. Go back to the A.A. and tell them they really put one over on you, man. Show them you can be—you know—just a gracious loser." Then they all stood looking at each other in the tiny room, with its four-color print of a bowl of chrysanthemums on the wall, its framed list of rules next to the door, its empty, dusty water pitcher and glass, its one armchair, its three-quarter beige-covered bed and its disinfectant smell, and it began to look as if none of them would ever go anyplace, just stand and turn into a kind of wax-museum scene; but then Grover and Étienne showed up, and the other kids let them in. Mr. McAfee made fists at his sides and went to the telephone again. "Get these kids out of here for me," he said, "would you? Please."

Étienne looked as if he were in a state of shock, and about twice as fat as usual. "I think the cops saw us," he kept saying. "Grovie, didn't they?" He was carrying all his skin-diving equipment, which he had an idea would be damning evidence if it were found at his house.

"He's nervous," Grover said. "What's wrong here—you having trouble?"

"We're trying to keep him from starting drinking," Hogan said. "He called A.A. for help, and now he says get out."

"I assume you are aware," Grover addressed the man, "of the positive correlation that exists between alcoholism and heart disease, chronic upper respiratory infection, cirrhosis of the liver ——"

"There he is," said Mr. McAfee. In the door, which had been ajar, now appeared Beto Cufifo, the bellboy and town rum-dum, who would have been retired and living on Social Security except that he was Mexican and wanted back there for something like smuggling or auto theft—the charge varied depending on who he was telling it to. How he had first found his way into Berkshire County nobody would ever know. People were always mistaking him for the only kinds of probable outlander—French Canadian or Italian—and you felt he enjoyed that easy ambiguity and that's why he stuck around Mingeborough.

"One bottle of booze," Beto announced. "That's six-fifty."

"What is it, six-fifty, imported from someplace?" Mr. McAfee said. He had out his wallet and snuck a quick look inside. Tim could only see one bill, a single.

"Tell them at the desk," Beto said. "I just carry."

"Look, put it on my room bill, right?" Mr. McAfee said, reaching for the bottle.

Beto put the bottle behind his back. "He says you got to pay now." There were so many lines in his face you couldn't make out the expression too well, but Tim thought he was smiling; a nasty smile. Mr. McAfee took out the dollar and held it up to Beto.

"Come on. Just put it on my tab." Tim could see sweat pouring off him, though nobody else in the room even looked warm.

Beto took the dollar and said, "Now that's five-fifty. I'm sorry. You talk to him down at the desk, sir."

"Hey, you guys," Mr. McAfee said, "any you kids got any bread? I mean I need five and a half—you think you could lend that to me?"

"Not for whiskey," said Hogan, "not even if I had it." The rest of them took out their loose change and held it in their hands and looked to see, but it only came to maybe a dollar and a quarter.

"That still leaves four-twenty-five," announced Beto.

"Oh, you a regular adding machine," yelled Mr. McAfee. "Come on, boy, come on, let's see that bottle."

"You don't believe me," said Beto, gesturing at the telephone, "they'll tell you. Ask them."

For a second it looked like Mr. McAfee might call down. But finally he said, "Look, I'll split it with you, Okay? Half that fifth. You must be pretty dry, all that work you do."

"I don't drink this stuff," said Beto. "I'm a wine man. Good night, sir." He started to close the door. Mr. McAfee jumped at him and made a grab for the bottle. Beto, taken by surprise, dropped it. It fell on the rug and rolled a foot or two. Mr. McAfee and Beto had hold of each other's arms and were struggling around, both very clumsy. Hogan picked up the bottle and ran out the door with it and Mr. McAfee saw him and said something like "Oh my God" and tried to get untangled from the bellboy. But by the time he could get to the door, Hogan had too good a head start, and Mr. McAfee must have known that. He just stood with his head on the doorjamb. Beto took out a comb and combed what there was of his hair. Then, hitching up his belt and glaring at Mr. McAfee, he walked around him and out into the hall, and backward all the way to the elevator, watching the colored man as if daring him to try it again.

Grover, Tim and Étienne stood around without knowing exactly what to do. Mr. McAfee had started making a noise in his throat, a sound none of them had heard come from a man before, though Norman, a stray, red kind of puppy who hung around with Pierre times when the hound wasn't sleeping, had once got hold of some chicken bones, which had stuck someplace inside him and Norman had lain out in the dark and made a sound something like it until Grover's father put the dog in his car and drove away with him. Mr. McAfee stood with his head resting on the side of the door, making the same sound. "Hey," Grover said finally, and went over and took the man's hand, which was only a little bigger than Grover's own but dark-colored, and pulled, and Tim said, yeah, come on, and little by little they pulled him away from the door, while Étienne turned down the beige spread on the bed, and they got him to lie down, and put the cover back over him. All of a sudden there was a siren outside. "Cops!" Étienne yelled, and took off for the bathroom. The siren went by the hotel, and Tim looked out and saw it was a fire engine heading out north, and by the time it was quiet in the room again they could hear water running in the bathtub, and Mr. McAfee crying. He'd rolled over on his stomach and was holding the pillow with both hands on either side of his head, and crying, the way a little kid cries, sucking air in in a croak, then letting it out in a wail, over and over as if he was never going to stop.

Tim closed the door and sat on the desk chair, Grover sat in the armchair next to the bed, and that was how their

"Daddy will pick you up here at four o'clock as usual."

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night's vigil began. First there was the crying; all they could do for that was sit and listen. Once the telphone rang. It was the clerk wanting to know if they were having any trouble, and Grover said, "No, he's all right. He'll be all right." Tim had to go in once to the bathroom, and there he found Étienne cowering submerged in a full tub, dressed in his frogman suit, looking like a black watermelon with arms and legs. Tim tapped him on the shoulder and Étienne started to thrash around, trying to go deeper. "No cops," Tim yelled as loud as he could. "It's Tim."

Étienne surfaced and took off his snorkel mask. "I'm hiding," he explained. "I tried to make soapsuds on top but there was only this real little bar of soap, and I guess it all wore off."

"Come on in and help us," Tim said. So Étienne came back in, trailing pools of water all over the place, and sat on the floor; and then the three of them just sat, listening to the man cry. He cried for a long time, and then dozed off. Sometimes he would wake up and talk for long stretches, then sleep again. Now and then one of the kids would drop off too. For Tim it was a little like staying over at Grovie's house and hearing all those cops and merchant captains and barge tenders over the radio, all those voices bouncing off the invisible dome in the sky and down to Grover's antenna and into Tim's dreams. It was as if Mr. McAfee too were broadcasting from somewhere quite distant, telling about things Tim would not be sure of in the daylight: a brother who'd left home one morning during the depression and got on a freight and disappeared, later sending them this one postcard from Los Angeles, and Mr. McAfee, just a boy, deciding to follow him there the same way, only that first time he got no further than Houston; a Mexican girl he'd been with for a while, and she used to drink some stuff all the time, a word Tim couldn't make out, and she had a baby boy who'd died from a rattlesnake bite (Tim saw the snake, headed for him, and bounced up out of the dream in terror, yelling), and so one morning she'd just gone away, like his brother vanished into the same deserted morning, before the sun was even up; and nights when he would sit by himself down around the docks and look off into the black Gulf, where the lights ended, just cut off and left you this giant nothing; and gang scuffles, day after day, up and down the neighborhood streets, or fights out on the beach in the summer's harsh sun; and gigs in New York, L.A., bad gigs with tenor-sax bands it was better to forget only how do you?; cops who'd picked him up, tanks he had known, tankmates with names like Big Knife, Paco-from-the-Moon, one Francis X. Fauntleroy (who'd taken his last wrinkled half a Pall Mall as he slept one evil morning after mixing pot and wine with a projectionist buddy down under a drive-in movie screen outside Kansas City, a big curving thing, while a John Wayne picture exploded overhead).

"*Blood Alley*," Tim said, gentle. "Yeah, I saw it. I saw it too."

Mr. McAfee slept a little then, and came awake remembering aloud another girl he'd met on a bus who played tenor and had just left a white musician she'd been with—this was out of Chicago going west. The two of them sat in the back seat over the motor, singing scat choruses of different things back and forth at each other, and later on in the night she slept on his shoulder and her hair was shiny and sweet, and around Cheyenne she got off and said she guessed she'd go down to Denver, so he never saw her again after that last glimpse of her little figure wandering around the old brick railroad depot across the street from the bus station, among all these ancient cowboy-movie-looking baggage carts, carrying her sax case and waving once at him when the bus pulled out. And he remembered then how he'd left Jill once the same way, only then it had been Lake Charles, Louisiana, back then when Camp Polk was still going strong, and the streets were full of drunken soldiers singing:

Mine eyes have seen the misery of
the coming of the draft,
And the day I got the letter was the
day I got the shaft.
They said, "My son, we need you,
'cause the Army's understaffed,"
And I'm in the F.T.A.

"The what?" said Grover.

"Future Teachers of America," said Mr. McAfee, "very clean-cut organization." And Jill was going on north, to St. Louis or someplace, and he was going back home, back to Beaumont, because his mother was sick. He and Jill had been living in Algiers, across the river from New Orleans, and that time it had been going on two months, not as long as their time in New York, not as short or disastrous as the time in L.A., and this time it had come only to a nostalgic, joint admission that there must be this good-bye at the junction point full of drunks out in the middle of a swamp in the middle of the night. "Hey, Jill," he said. "Hey, baby."

"Who do you want?" Grover said.

"His wife," said Tim.

"Jill?" the man on the bed said. His eyes were closed and he looked as if he were struggling to open them. "Is Jill here?"

"You said she was coming to get you," Tim said.

"No, no, she not coming, man, who told you that?" His eyes flew open suddenly, startling-white. "You got to call her. Hey? Hogan? Call her for me?"

"Tim," Tim said. "What's her number?"

"In my wallet." He took out the wallet, an old brown cowhide one that was bulging apart with papers and stuff. "Here." He looked through it, his fingers scattering things, pulling out old business cards from employment agencies and car dealers and restaurants all across the country, and a calendar from two years ago with dates for University of Texas football games printed on one side, and a four-for-a-quarter photograph of him in his Army uniform and smiling, holding a girl in a white coat who was looking down and smiling a little too, and a spare shoelace, and somebody's lock of hair folded into an envelope with part of some hospital's name up in the corner, an old Army driver's license that wasn't any good any more, and a couple of pine needles, a piece of saxophone reed, all kinds of scraps of paper, different colors and shapes. One blue one said "Jill," and had an address in New York, and a telephone number.

"Here." He gave it to Tim. "Call her

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collect. You know how to make one of them?" Tim nodded. "You got to ask for an outside line. Person-to-person to Miss Jill"—snapping his fingers to call the name back—"ah, Jill Pattison. Yeah."

"It's late," Tim said. "Will she still be up?" Mr. McAfee didn't say anything. Tim got the line, and the long-distance operator, and placed the call. "You don't want me to give them *my* name."

"No, no, tell them Carl McAfee." Then the line seemed to go dead. When it came back on she was ringing. It rang a long time and then a man answered.

"No," he said, "no, she went out the Coast a week ago."

"Do you have another number where she can be reached?" said the operator.

"There's an address someplace." He went away. Silence fell on the line and it was right around then that Tim's foot felt the edge of a certain abyss which he had been walking close to—for who knew how long?—without knowing. He looked over it, got afraid, and shied away, but not before learning something unpleasant about the night: that it was night here, and in New York, and probably on whatever coast the man was talking about, one single night over the entire land, making people, already so tiny in it, invisible too in the dark; and how hard it would be, how hopeless, to really find a person you needed suddenly, unless you lived all your life in a house like he did, with a mother and father. He turned around to look at the man on the bed and there came to him a hint then of how lost Mr. McAfee really was. What would he do if they couldn't find this girl? And then the man came back and read an address, which Tim copied, and the operator wanted to know if she should try Los Angeles information.

"Yeah," said Mr. McAfee.

"But she can't come get you if she's in Los Angeles."

"But I got to talk to her."

So Tim listened while more clicks and whirs went out like heard fingers, groping across the whole country in the dark, trying to touch one person out of all the millions that lived in it. Finally a girl answered and said she was Jill Pattison. The operator told her she had a collect call from a Carl McAfee.

"Who?" she said.

Somebody knocked on the door, and Grover went and got it. The operator repeated Mr. McAfee's name, and the girl said "Who?" again. There were two policemen at the door. Étienne, who'd been sitting behind the bed, gave a yelp and scuttled away into the bathroom and jumped back in the tub with a great splash.

"Leon, down at the desk, thought we ought to look in," one of the cops said. "Did this man bring you kids up here?"

"The clerk knows he didn't," Grover said.

"What should I ——" Tim said, waving the phone.

"Hang up," said Mr. McAfee. "Forget it." He tightened his hands into fists and lay looking at the cops.

"Fella," said the other cop, "bellboy says you didn't have the price of a bottle of whiskey a while ago."

"That's right," said Mr. McAfee.

"Room here's seven dollars a night. How were you going to pay for that?"

"I wasn't," said Mr. McAfee. "I'm a vagrant."

"Come on," said the first cop.

"Hey," Tim said, "you can't. He's sick. Call the A.A.—they know about him."

"Cool off, son," said the other cop. "He's going to get a nice free room tonight."

"Call Doctor Slothrop," Tim said. The cops had taken Mr. McAfee off the bed and were moving him toward the door.

"My things?" he said.

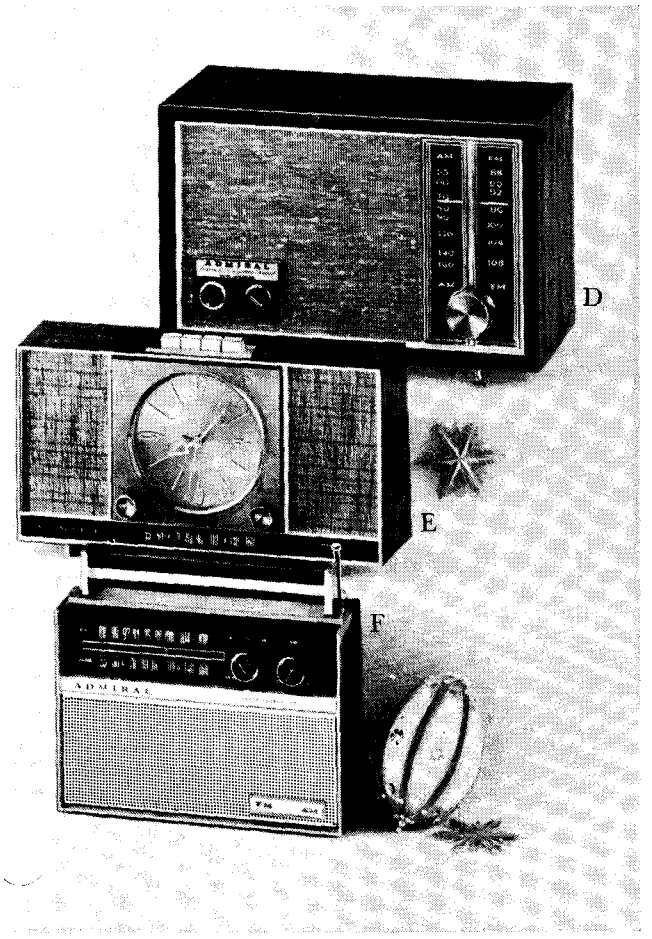
"Somebody'll take care of them. Come on. You kids too. It's time you were getting home."

Tim and Grover followed them down the hall, into the elevator, out through the lobby past the clerk and into the empty street, where the cops put Mr. McAfee into a patrol car. Tim wondered if either of their voices had ever come over the radio rig at Grover's, had ever figured in any of his dreams. "Be careful," he yelled at them. "He's real sick. You got to take care of him."

"Oh, we'll take care of him," said the cop who wasn't driving. "He knows it too, don't he? Look at him." Tim looked. All he could see were the whites of eyes, and cheekbones highlighted in sweat. Then the car took off, leaving the odor of rubber and a long screech hanging at the curb. That was the last they saw of him. They went down to the station house next day, but the cops said he'd been taken to Pittsfield, and there was no way at all of knowing whether they were telling the truth.

A few days later the paper mill started up again, and then there was that year's Operation Spartacus to worry about, and then the idea Nunzi Passarella came up with of getting car batteries from Étienne's father's junkyard, and a couple of old surplus spotlights and some sickly green cellophane, and rigging the lights up by the railroad cut just outside Mingeborough where the train had to slow down for a curve, getting at least fifty kids to put on rubber monster masks of various kinds, and capes and homemade bat outfits and such, then sit around on the slopes of the cut until the train came, switching on the sickly green spotlights just as it appeared around the curve, and see what happened. Only half the expected number of kids showed up but it was still a success, the train coming to a horrible grinding halt, ladies screaming, conductors yelling, Étienne cutting the lights and the kids fleeing away up the sides of the cut and into the fields. Grover, who'd been sporting a zombie mask of his own design, had afterward said something curious: "I feel different now and better for having been green, even sickly green, even for a minute." Though they never talked about it, Tim felt the same way.

In the spring he and Étienne hopped a freight train for the first time in their lives, and rode to Pittsfield to see a merchant name of Artie Cognomen, a stout, poker-faced, onetime Bostonian who looked like a selectman and smoked a pipe with a bowl carved in the shape of Winston Churchill's head, complete with cigar. Artie sold practical jokes. "Have a very nice dribble glass in with the spring consignment," he informed them. "Also a wide selection in whoopee cushions, exploding cigars ——" "No," said Étienne. "What kind of disguises you got?" Artie showed them all he had—wigs, fake noses, glasses with bug eyes on them—but what they finally settled for was a couple of moustaches you could clip to your nose and two little tins of blackface makeup. "You guys must be reactionaries or something," Mr.



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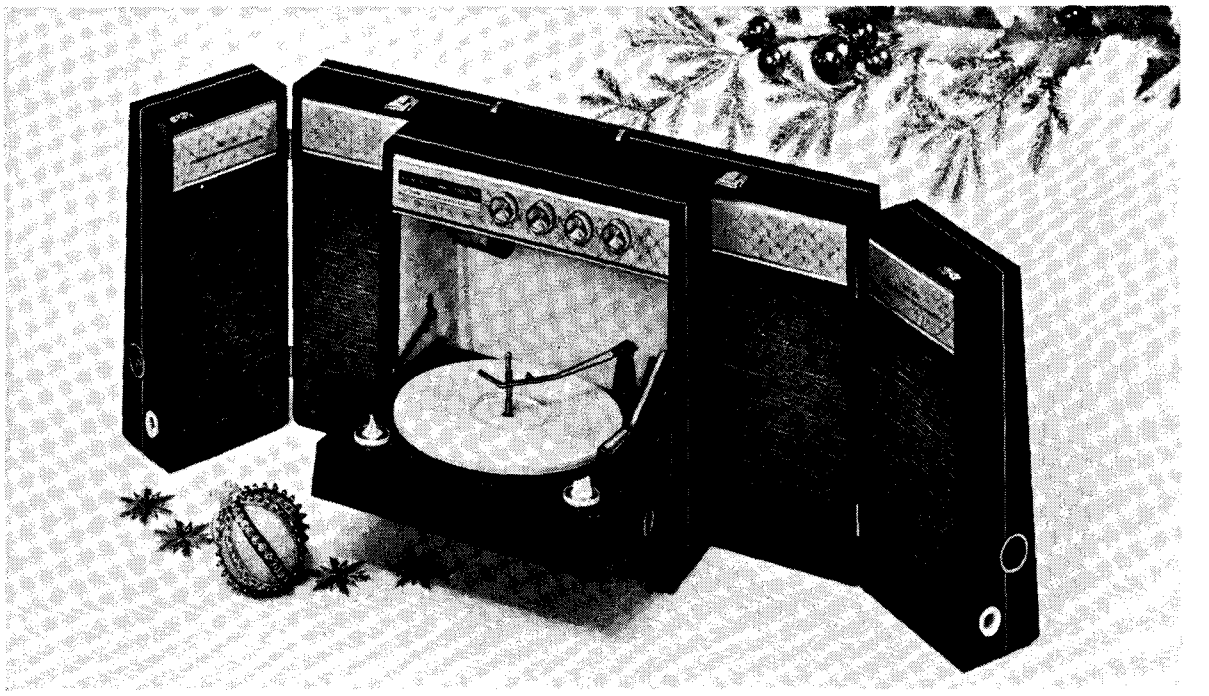

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Cognomen told them. "This stuff has been sitting around for years. It may even have turned white. You trying to resurrect vaudeville or something?" "We're trying to resurrect a friend," Étienne answered right back without thinking, and then he and Tim looked at each other in surprise, as if some fourth person in the room had said it.

Then this summer the Barringtons had moved into Northumberland Estates, and the kids, as usual, had advance word on it. Their parents suddenly seemed to spend more time talking about the coming of the Barringtons than anything else. They began to use words like "block-busting" and "integration."

"What's integration mean?" Tim asked Grover.

"The opposite of differentiation," Grover said, drawing an x-axis, y-axis and curve on his greenboard. "Call this function of x. Consider values of the curve at tiny little increments of x"—drawing straight vertical lines from the curve down to the x-axis, like the bars of a jail cell—"you can have as many of these as you want, see, as close together as you want."

"Till it's all solid," Tim said.

"No, it never gets solid. If this was a jail cell, and those lines were bars, and whoever was behind it could make himself any size he wanted to be, he could always make himself skinny enough to get free. No matter how close together the bars were."

"This is integration," said Tim.

"The only kind I ever heard of," said Grover. Late that night they tuned in on Grover's parents' bedroom, to see if they could find out anything new about the Negro family that was coming.

"They're worried up there," Mr. Snodd said. "They don't know whether to start selling now or try and stick it out. All it takes is one to panic."

"Well," said Grover's mother, "thank God they don't have any children, or there'd be a panic in the PTA, too."

Intrigued, they sent Hogan in to the next PTA meeting to see what was up. Hogan reported back the same thing: "They say there's no kids this time, but they ought to be looking ahead and making plans in case it ever does happen."

It was hard to see what their parents were all so scared of. As it turned out, not only scared but also misinformed. The day after the Barringtons finally did move in, Tim, Grover and Étienne went up to their house after school just to look around. They found the house no different from any others in the development; but then, leaning against a steel street light, watching them, they saw the kid. He was kind of rangy and dark, and he was wearing a sweater, even though it was warm out. The others introduced themselves and said they were going up to the overpass to drop water balloons on cars, and would he like to come along?

"What's your name?" Étienne said.

"Well," said the kid, snapping his fingers for it, "it's Carl. Yeah. *Carl* Barrington." Turned out he had a perfect eye for getting water balloons to splat right on a guy's windshield. They went over to the junkyard later and fooled around with ball bearings and busted automatic-transmission units, and then walked Carl home. The next day he was in school, and every day after that. He sat quietly in a seat in the corner that had been empty, and the teacher never called on him, though he was as smart as Grover on some things. A week or so later Grover learned the other meaning for integration, from watching Huntley and Brinkley, the only television show he ever looked at.

"It means white kids and colored kids in the same school," Grover said.

"Then we're integrated," Tim said. "Hey."

"Yeah. They don't know it, but we're integrated."

Then Tim's and Grover's folks, and even, according to Hogan, the progressive Doctor Slothrop, started in with the telephone calls, and the name-calling, and the dirty words they got so angry with kids for using. The only parent who was keeping out of it seemed to be Étienne's father. "He says why don't people stop worrying about Negroes and start worrying about automation," Étienne reported. "What's automation, Grovie?"

"I start studying it next week," said Grover. "I'll tell you then." But he didn't, because by that time they were all involved again with the arrangements for this year's Spartacus maneuvers. They began to spend more and more time up at the hideout at King Yrjö's, plotting. They knew by now, their third year at it, that the reality would turn out to be considerably less than the plot, that something inert and invisible, something they could not be cruel to or betray (though who would have gone so far as to call it love?) would always be between them and any clear or irreversible step, as much as the powdery fiction of the school's outline on Fazzo's Field had stopped the little kids last year. Because everybody on the school board, and the railroad, and the PTA and paper mill had to be somebody's mother or father, whether really or as a member of a category; and there was a point at which the reflex to their covering warmth, protection, effectiveness against bad dreams, bruised heads and simple loneliness took over and made worthwhile anger with them impossible.

Still, the four of them sat now in the secret room, which had grown cold with the approach of night, while Pierre, the basset hound, nosed restlessly in the corners. They agreed that Carl would run a time-motion study on letting air out of tires in the shopping center's parking lot, and Étienne would make more of an effort to obtain parts for the gigantic sodium catapult Grover had designed; and that Tim would begin each run-through of Operation Spartacus with a few more limbering-up exercises, taking the Royal Canadian Air Force plan as a point of departure. Grover allotted them the personnel they felt they would need, and then at last they adjourned. In single file they reran the house's gantlet of shadows, resonances and dread possibilities, came out into the rain which had not stopped, and re-embarked on the *S.S. Leak*.

They rowed her as far as the culvert under the state highway, then walked through that, and skirted around a piece of the swamp to Fazzo's Field, to check out the maneuver site. Then they went over to the stretch of track beyond the point designated Foxtrot, and crouched among barren shadbushes whose berries they had eaten earlier in the year, and lobbed rocks down on the tracks to see how the angle of fire was. They couldn't tell too much because there was hardly any light left to the sky. So they walked the tracks back almost to the Mingeborough station, then cut over into town, where they came trailing into the candy store, beginning to feel a little tired, sat in a row at the empty counter and ordered four lemon-limes with water. "Four?" said the lady behind the fountain. "Four," said Grover, and as usual she gave them a funny look. For a while they hung around the revolving wire racks, looking through comics; then they walked Carl home, through the quickening rain.

Even before they reached the Barringtons' block they felt something was wrong. Two cars and a pickup truck trailing garbage came tearing by from that direction, windshield wipers batting furiously, tires sending up wings of water that splashed the kids even though they jumped up on one of the lawns. Tim looked over at Carl, but Carl didn't say anything.

When they got to Carl's house they found the front lawn littered with garbage. For a while they only stood; then, as if compelled to do so, began kicking through it, looking for clues. The garbage was shin-deep all over the lawn, neatly spread right up to the property line. They must have brought it all in the pickup. Tim found the familiar A & P shopping bags his mother always brought home, and the skins of some big yellow oranges an aunt had sent them as a gift from Florida, and the pint box of pineapple sherbet Tim himself had bought two nights ago, and all the intimacy of the throwaway part, the shadow-half of his family's life for all the week preceding, the crumpled envelopes addressed to his father and mother, the stubs of the black De Nobili cigars his father liked to smoke after supper, the folded beer cans, always with the point coming in between the two e's of the word "beer," exactly the way his father did and had taught him how to do—ten square yards of irrefutable evidence. Grover was going around unfolding papers and turning over things and finding out that his garbage was there too. "And Slothrops' and Mostlys'," Étienne reported, "and I guess a lot of people from around the development here, too."

They'd been picking up garbage for about five minutes, throwing it in cans they found by the carport, when the front door opened and Mrs. Barrington started yelling at them.

"But we're cleaning it up," Tim said. "We're on your side."

"We don't need your help," the woman said. "We don't need any of you on our side. I thank our heavenly Father every day of my life that we don't have any children to be corrupted by the likes of you trash. Now get out, go on now." She started to cry.

Tim shrugged and threw away an orange peel he was holding. He considered getting a beer can to confront his father with, but then figured all that would get him was spanked, and hard, so he forgot about it. The three of them walked away, slowly, looking back now and then at the woman, who was still standing in her doorway. They'd gone two blocks before they realized that Carl was still with them.

"She didn't mean it," he said. "She just—you know—mad."

"Yeah," said Tim and Grover.

"I don't know"—the boy, now almost faded into the rain, gestured back at the house—"if I should go in now, or what. What should I do?"

Grover, Tim and Étienne looked at one another. Grover, as spokesman, said, "Why don't you lay low for a while?"

"Yeah," Carl said. They walked down to the shopping center and across the slick black parking lot that reflected greenish mercury-vapor lights, and a red supermarket sign, and a blue gas-station sign, and many yellow lights. They walked among these colors on the wide black pavement that seemed to stretch to the mountains.

"I guess I'll—you know—go up to the hideout, then," Carl said, "up to King Yrjö's place."

"At night?" Étienne said. "What about the calvary officer?"

"Cavalry," said Grover.

"He won't bother me," said Carl. "You know."

"We know," said Tim. Sure they did: Everything Carl said, they knew. It had to be that way: He was what grownups, if *they'd* known, would have called an "imaginary playmate." His words were the kids' own words; his gestures too, the faces he made, the times he had to cry, the way he shot baskets; all given by them an amplification or grace they expected to grow into presently. Carl had been put together out of phrases, images, possibilities that grownups had somehow turned away from, repudiated, left out at the edges of towns, as if they were auto parts in Étienne's father's junkyard—things they could or did not want to live with but which the kids, on the other hand, could spend endless hours with, piecing together, rearranging, feeding, programming, refining. He was entirely theirs, their friend and robot, to cherish, buy undrunk sodas for, or send into danger, or even, as now, at last, to banish from their sight.

"If I like it," Carl said, "I might stay there a while too." The others nodded, and then Carl broke loose and took off at a jogging run across the lot, waving his hand without looking back. When he'd vanished in the rain, the three kids put their hands in their pockets and started back for Grover's house.

"Grovie," said Étienne, "are we still integrated? If he doesn't come back? Hops a freight somewhere or something?"

"Ask your father," said Grover. "I don't know anything." Étienne picked up a handful of wet leaves and stuffed them down Grover's back. Grover kicked water at him but missed and splashed Tim. Tim jumped up and shook a branch, showering Grover and Étienne. Étienne tried to push Tim over Grover, who'd got down on all fours, but Tim caught on and pushed Grover's face in the mud. That was how they left the lights of the shopping center and took leave of Carl Barrington, abandoning him to the old estate's other attenuated ghosts and its precarious shelter; and rollicked away into that night's rain, each finally to his own house, hot shower, dry towel, beforebed television, good night kiss, and dreams that could never again be entirely safe. THE END

Thomas Pynchon is the author of a first novel, called simply V, *which received extraordinary praise when it was published last year. Previously his stories had been reprinted in both the* O. Henry Prize Stories *and Martha Foley's* Best American Short Stories. "*The Secret Integration*" *is his first story to be published since the appearance of* V.

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The Birthday Party

BY GINA BERRIAULT

The boy, wakened by the sound of his mother's heels as she went past his door, ran out into the hallway. She turned when he called to her. She had her coat on; her face was without make-up, and pale.

"Where you going?" he cried.

"Get back in bed," she called back. "You're old enough to be left alone."

"*You* get back!" he shouted.

She went on through the living room, her head down.

"It's very late," he pleaded. "I'm already in bed."

"When you wake up I'll be back already," she said. "Call Grandma if I'm not. If I'm not, then I'm never."

When the room was empty he heard, from where he stood in the hallway, the faint music from the radio. In the past few weeks, she went out often during the day or was not home when he returned from school, but she always came back before it was time for supper; she left him often in the evening, but the girl from the apartment downstairs always came in and did her homework at the desk and stayed with him. His mother wept often and brooded often, but she had never left him late at night and had never threatened not to come back. Though she had wandered the apartment all evening, saying no word to him, her jaws holding back the furor so forcibly she could not open them to eat or speak, he had not expected her to go out in the middle of the night.

He ran into her bedroom. It was untidy; dresser drawer was out, her white negligee was on the floor, and the big, black-marble ashtray on the bed table was filled with cigarette butts. The bed's silk spread was wrinkled and there were small depressions where her fists had pounded. He crawled under the covers and lay down in the center of the bed, and the return of sleep was like her return.

Perhaps it is not God who visits the sins of the parents on the children—perhaps it is the parents themselves.

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Illustrated by Bill Charmatz

The sun, and the lamp still lit, shocked him awake. Afraid that she had not returned, he leaped from the bed and ran out into the hallway, calling. She answered from his room and sat up in his bed when he went in. She was in her slip, her coat and dress on the chair.

"You said you weren't coming back!" he shouted. It sounded like an accusation that she had not kept her promise.

"That's all right," she said. "If I hadn't, you're ·ven years old, you're old enough to do without .. That's a sign of maturity," she said, her mouth dry—"to do without a person."

"You said you weren't coming back!" he shouted again. He stood in his pajamas in the doorway, terrorized by her troubles that had driven her out at midnight and detached her so from him that her return seemed imagined. The man she was going to marry—who was going to be a more fatherly father, she had said, than his own had ever been—had not come by to see her for many weeks, and it was to see him that she had gone out in the evening so many times, and it was probably to see him that she had gone out last night.

"I always come back," she said. "Like the cat the man was always trying to get rid of in the song. He tied her to the railroad tracks and he threw her into the ocean with a rock, but she always came back the very next day." She reached to the chair, her fingers digging into her coat pockets. "Well, no more cigarettes." She shrugged. "All I did was drink coffee at the places that stay open all night. You would have enjoyed it. Saw two motorcycle cops eating hot apple pie. They had their helmets off and they looked human. And I slept in the car a little while, but my legs got cramped. You should see the stars out there at four in the morning."

She tossed off the blankets, hung her clothes over her arm, and walked past him in her bare feet to her own bedroom. He followed her, unwilling, now that she had returned, to let her go from his sight.

"Who's going to take me to Molly's party?"

"I'll take you," she said. "Grandma's going early, and it's out of her way to pick you up, anyway. But, my God, it's not until two."

"We've got to buy a present," he said, afraid that nothing would be attended to from now on, that everything would be neglected; using the party to urge her to look after him again, to distract him again, and engage him again.

She picked up her negligee from the floor and clasped it around her and roamed the room, looking for cigarettes. She gazed into the gilded, oval mirror above her dressing table, while her fingertips felt among the jars and bottles for cigarettes. "Oh, don't you fret, don't you cry," she said to him mockingly; she gazed at herself

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Gina Berriault has received high praise for her two novels, The Descent *(1960) and* Conference of Victims *(1962). Her short stories have received numerous awards, among them* The Paris Review *Aga Khan fiction prize (1956) and two O. Henry awards (1958, 1960); they have been included in Martha Foley's* Best American Short Stories, *in* Forty Best Short Stories From Mademoiselle, *and in* Short Story One. *She now lives with her daughter in Mill Valley, California.*

as if she were trying to accept as herself the woman with the swollen eyelids. "We'll be there on time and we'll bring a present too. You're an anxiety hound," she said. "Oh, the champion anxiety hound."

He began to prepare himself for the party, searching for his shoe-polish kit and finding it in his closet under a stack of games. He sat down on the floor and polished his best shoes. He was not fond of Molly, who would be nine, and he saw her seldom, but he prepared himself now as if he and Molly were the best of friends. In his pajamas he went into the bathroom and combed his hair, wetting it until it was black and drops ran down his face, and combing it over and over. He slipped on a shirt, put on his suit and turned the shirt collar down over the collar of the jacket, the way his mother always did. At noon he called to her from her doorway, waking her.

In the jewelry store, where he had gone with her a few times to buy presents, they looked at a tray of bracelets. Around the walls were large, colored pictures of coats of arms; on the counter tops were silver trays and bowls and candlesticks. When she asked him if he preferred a silver chain with charms or a silver chain with one small pearl dangling from it in a silver claw, he did not balk at a choice, as he had done in the past when he had not cared and had known that even if he cared she would have made her own choice. He put his finger on the one with the pearl. Like himself in the past, she did not care, or else he had persuaded her with his decisiveness, for she nodded at the salesman, who smiled as if it were the most appropriate choice anyone would ever make and caught it up with graceful fingers.

He followed his mother down the few stone steps to the terrace above which strings of red and blue triangular flags crossed from the upper windows of the gray stucco house to the balustrade. Under the flags, a throng of children wandered in twos and threes and clustered together over games, their voices rising high on the warm, still air. His mother had a little swing to her walk that implied that parties for children were what she liked best in life, and, walking this way, went into the midst of so many children that he lost her. At the moment that he saw her again, his grandmother clapped him over the ears, lifting his face to hers and kissing him on both cheeks. Above her head, as she bent to him, the flags burned their colors into the clear sky.

With her arm around his shoulders, his grandmother led him away to the corner of the lawn, where Molly's mother was trailing her bare arm above the long table, dropping colored candy, tiny as seeds, into the red crepe-paper basket at each place. He could hear the small sound of the seeds falling because the commotion of the children was far enough away.

"We filled them all last night," she said. "Tons. But today they look half filled. Up to the brim, that's the way," she said, motioning him to cup his hands and pouring candies into them. He began to help her, awkwardly, following her to drop a few more into baskets she had already filled. "Where's your mother?" she asked.

"She just stayed a minute, to kiss Molly," his grandmother said. "She's coming back later to pick him up."

"Is that you, Elsie?" somebody called to his grandmother from the kitchen. Because his hands were empty and Molly's mother seemed to have lost all sense of his presence, he followed his grandmother. She was small and quick in her coral dress, and her large, yellow beads made a faint jangling. In the white, sunlit kitchen, Molly's grandmother, in a smock stitched with a large, red rose whose stem was as long as the smock, was sticking tiny pink candles into the high, pink cake. Her hand, small and bony, covered with brown spots like freckles melted together, was trembling. She was his grandmother's best friend; they were so close they were like sisters.

"Tell me if I ought to use the white candles, if you think I ought to use the white candles," she begged.

"You can alternate," his grandmother suggested.

"Oh, that's strange, don't you think? Who does that?" the old lady demanded crossly. One pink candle fell into the thick frosting. "Oh, pick it out!" she cried to him. "Your fingers are littler!" But while he thought about the possibility of his clumsiness, she darted her hand in among the upright candles and picked it out herself. "All the same color!" she cried decisively. "Little girls like pink." But in a moment she was undecided again. "Elsie," she wailed, "is pink all right?"

The old woman's wailing over the candles alarmed him. He wondered if his mother was gone already, and he went out the back door of the kitchen, down a narrow passage overhung with vines, and out onto the terrace again. She was not there among the children; he leaned over the balustrade, and she was not with two other mothers standing and chatting in the small garden below, and again he felt the terror of the night before. He was afraid that she would not return for him, that her threat of the night would be carried out that day, and he wished that he had not gone off with his grandmother and that he had not reminded his mother of the party, and he imagined himself fighting her, if she had remembered the party herself—clinging to the bedpost and to the railing on the front steps and to her.

A little girl passed by, ringing a bell, and he was jostled along by the other children toward the birthday table. In the throng roving around the table he looked for his name on the triangular paper flag above each crepe-paper basket. There were so many names that, after a time, he got confused and found himself going around behind the same chairs, now with children seated in them. He read only at empty chairs and found his place. Under a high, red-paper canopy affixed to her chair back, Molly sat at the head of the table. At her elbow, the many presents were piled in a red-paper cart with blue wheels. The cake was carried in by Molly's mother, followed by his grandmother bearing a great, cut-glass bowl of pink ice cream. Molly's grandmother went along behind the children, pouring pink juice from a large, white-china pitcher into paper cups; another pitcher, of glass, frosted from the cold liquid, waited on a corner of the table.

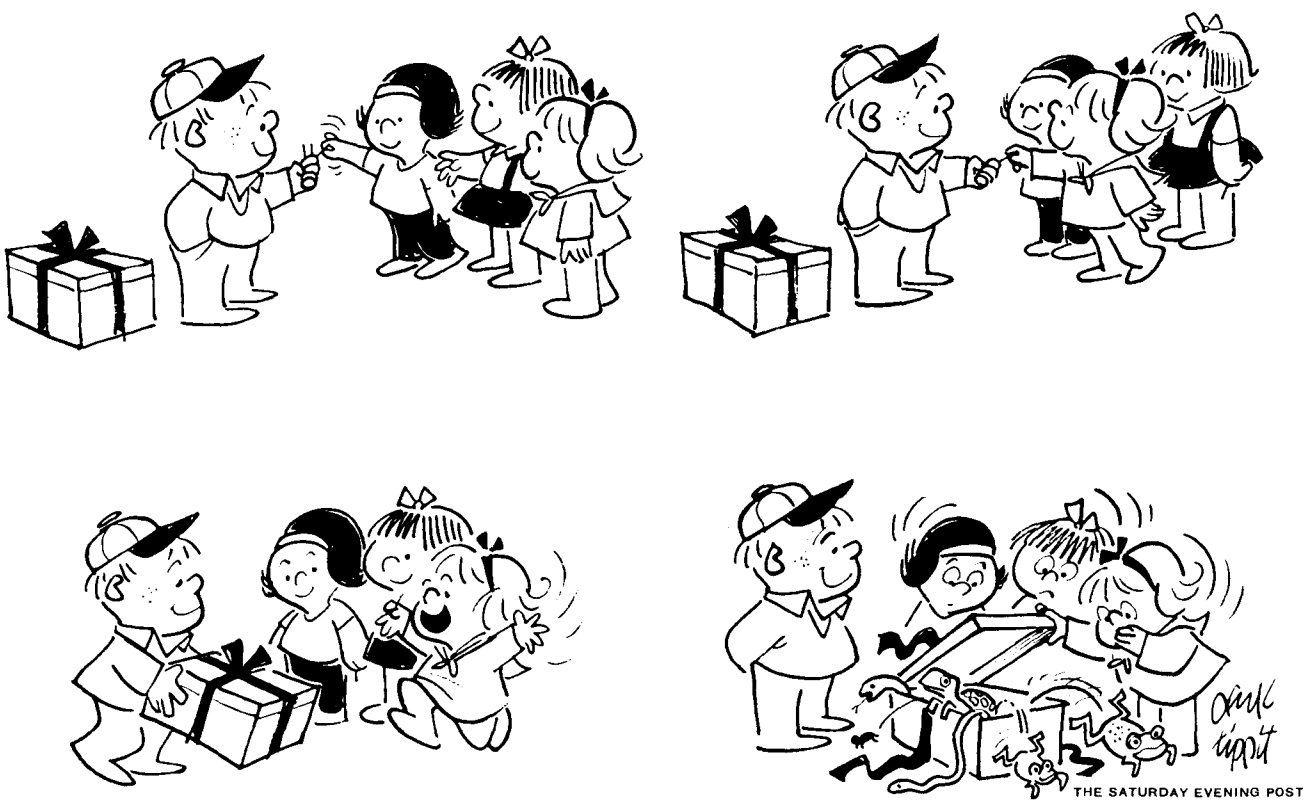
Molly braced her hands against the edge of the table and blew at the candles. Seven stayed out, two flared up again.

"You're too excited," her mother cried. "You're gasping." Although her voice was amused and loud, he heard an edge of annoyance. Molly, after a calm, deep breath, blew again, and the two little flames became rising wisps of smoke.

Molly's grandmother sat down beside her to eat a bit of cake. He was next to her, around the corner of the table, and her bony knees knocked his. "Oh, I think this is the nicest party I've ever been to!" she cried, beating the edge of the table with her fingers as if rapping time to a tune. Her voice seemed to him deliberately quavery, appealing to the children. "Isn't it, dear? Isn't it?" she begged him, patting him on the knee with rapping fingers.

Molly, under her canopy, lifted the presents one by one up from the ribbons and rustling papers. Each time she swung to the side to take a present from the cart, or clapped her hands, her long hair bounced against her back. The children nearest her, himself among them, fingered the gifts piling up before her—a long bow and a leather quiver of arrows, a small doll with a bald head and three wigs, dyed red and yellow and black, each like a puff of cocoon silk; a lifelike poodle dog of dark gray wool; a white petticoat with blue ribbons entwined in it, for which she kissed her grandmother, whose restless hands rested for that moment on the wrapping papers she was folding. The transistor radio she turned on at once, and the tiny, crackling voices of the singers went on and on under the tissue paper and other presents. She held up the bracelet, shaking it high above her head, as if it were something musical, and dropped her hands to open another present. There was a gift from each one at the table and from other people who were not there—uncles and aunts who lived in other cities. There was such a profusion of gifts that it seemed to him the reason for the party was more than that the day was her birthday. The party, he felt, was to take care of any crying to come.

On the terrace a puppet tent had been set up, a rickety frame draped with red cloth. Up high in it, like a small window, was the stage. The children sat on the ground, and behind them sat the women in bamboo chairs. From the corner of his eye he saw his grandmother in her chair; he saw the coral dress and heard the



THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

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beads jangle whenever she shifted her body or clapped. Last night his mother had told him to call his grandmother in the morning, and her presence now, a few feet away, at this time when the party was tapering off and some mothers were already returning and watching the puppet show, was like proof that his mother would not return. Up in the little stage the jerky puppets with cawing voices, the Indian chief with a feather headdress, an eagle, a bluebird, and a pioneer boy with a coonskin cap, shook their arms and wings and heads at one another and sometimes collapsed over the edge of the stage. The laughter around him startled him each time, because he was watching the steps from the street and each mother coming down.

When the curtains jerkily closed, a young man with a beard, wearing a tunic of coarse cotton embroidered in red, and a woman with long hair that hung down her back like a little girl's, came out from behind the stage. The man bowed; the woman picked up the sides of her wide, flowered skirt and curtsied like a good and proper child. Some of the mothers slipped sweaters over their children's shoulders and guided them across the terrace and up the steps, and some gathered in a cluster with Molly's mother while their children gathered around the puppeteers to see the puppets put away in the tapestry satchel, each one waving as it went down. From a chair he watched the women and children climb the steps, until only one mother was left, chatting with the three other women while her two daughters wandered the terrace with Molly. He was watching the red tent carried up by the couple, swaying between them, when he saw his mother coming down, nimbly sidestepping. He saw her change the expression of her face, smiling at the couple and expecting to smile at whoever she saw next. She waved to him, the only child among the empty chairs, a wave that implied she knew the party had been wonderful, and crossed before him to the women. She had a sweater on now, as did the other women whose circle she joined. He saw his grandmother kiss her on the cheek, grasping and shaking her elbow, and his relief was expressed for him a little by his grandmother's emphatic claiming of her.

"So, Molly?" his mother called to the girl. "How does it feel to be nine?"

"What?" called Molly.

"To be nine? How does it feel?"

"Oh, I feel the same, I guess," Molly called back, a slight wonder and vexation in her voice. She went on wandering with the other girls—some purpose to their wandering that only they knew—their heads bent over something in her hands. The light wind picked up the ends of their hair and the ends of their sashes.

Molly's mother laughed. "In a few years she'll begin to feel the difference," she said.

"When she begins to feel it," her grandmother said, "you won't need to throw any more parties. She won't let you. Isn't that so, Molly?" she called, but her voice was too frail to be heard far.

"She can't know if it's so," said her mother, again with that loud voice that was both amused and annoyed.

His mother motioned to him and began to move away from the others, and his grandmother joined her. He got up from the chair and was a step ahead of them. All over the terrace the seedlike candies lay scattered, and a few ribbons, here and there, were blown along an inch at a time.

"You act like you want to get away," his mother said behind him, raising her voice a little to make sure he heard, but keeping it too low to be heard by the women they were leaving. "I came down and saw him in that chair as if he were suffering punishment," she said to her mother. "This morning he couldn't wait to go. He was ready at six."

"It wasn't that early," he said, hurt by her ridicule.

"No, he wasn't ready at six. I was out till six," she said, and the sound of the anguish remaining in her throat from the night silenced the three of them.

"Is it over? With that man? Is it all over?" his grandmother asked her as they climbed.

He turned, because he no longer heard their heels on the stone steps, and saw that his mother was covering her face with her hand and with the other hand was clutching her purse to her breasts. The way her chest bowed in and the way her fingers spread, trembling, over her face made her appear as fragile as her mother.

"Ah, not here, Lovely. Not here," his grandmother pleaded, touching his mother's fingers. So much love went out to her daughter that her old body seemed depleted suddenly. "The children, they can see you," she warned. "They can see you, and they've had such a nice day. Ah, not here." With her arm around his mother's waist, she made her continue up the steps. Before he turned away, he saw the three girls gazing up at them curiously from under the strings of red and blue flags fluttering in the wind. THE END

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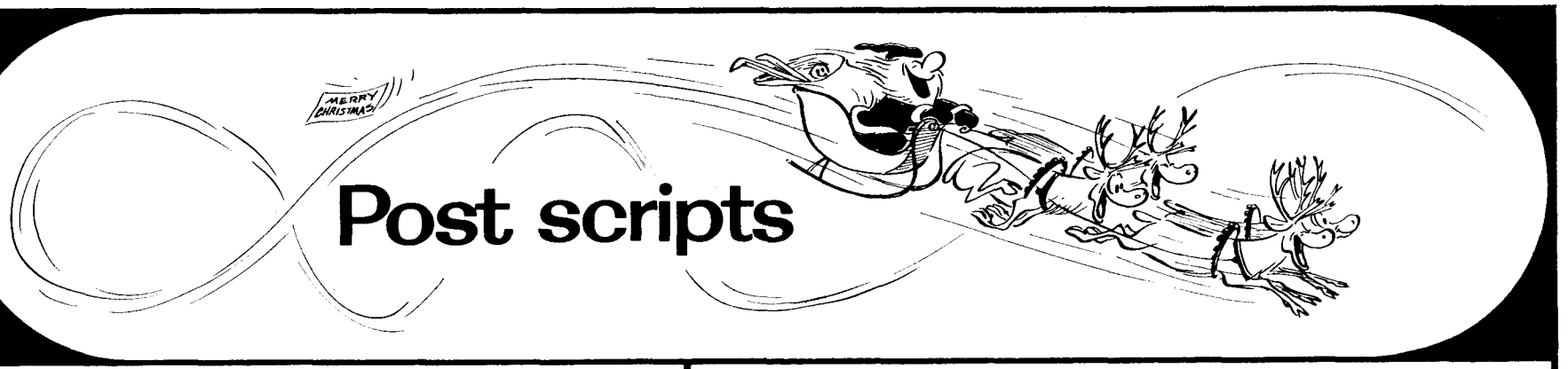
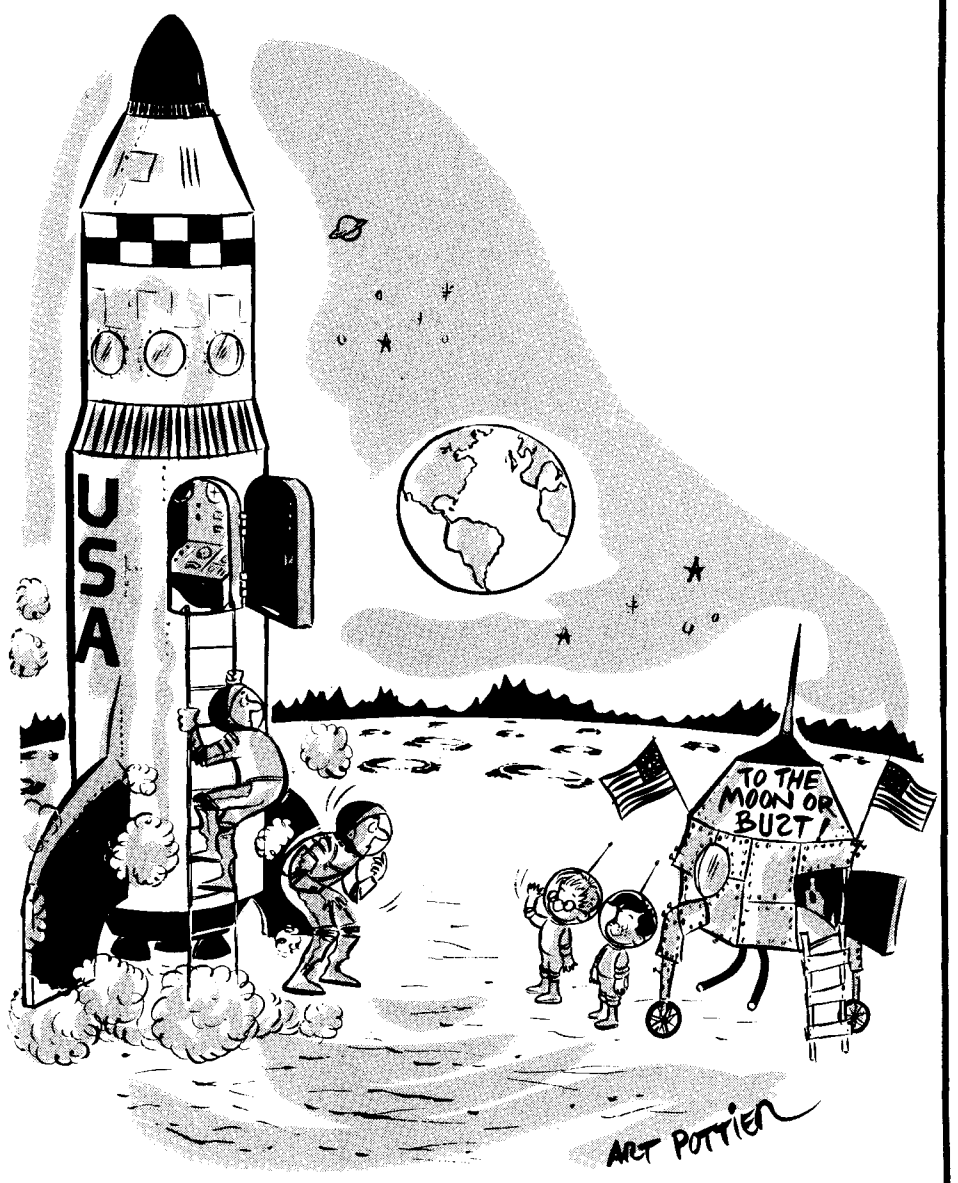
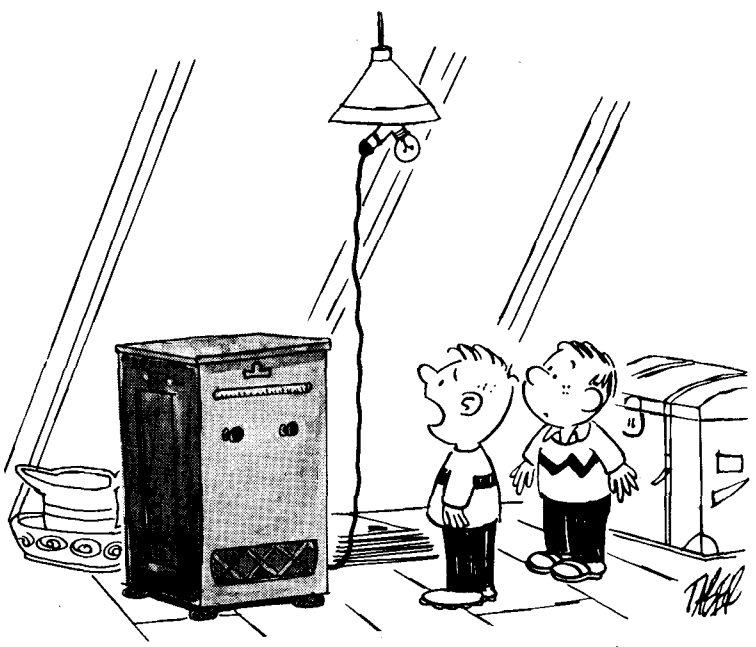


Post scripts



"Can we stay up until the police come?"



"Boy, this is a real relic. I can hear the sound, but where do you suppose is the picture?"

"Stop whimpering. I can't hear the music."

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How come one company pays out a million dollars an hour?

That's how much Metropolitan Life policyholders and beneficiaries collect every hour of the working day. Last year, it added up to more than a cool $2 billion. And two-thirds of it went to living policyholders.

Because we insure more people, it figures that we *do* more. A lot more. Especially for our policyholders. One thing we do is train our representatives in the field to make a clear and expert analysis of exactly where your family would be if you died or someday decided to retire.

Metropolitan calls this a Family Security Check-Up. It's confidential and it's free.

Wouldn't you feel a little safer if you had one? Just call your Metropolitan adviser and it's yours.

More choose Metropolitan Life

millions more than any other company

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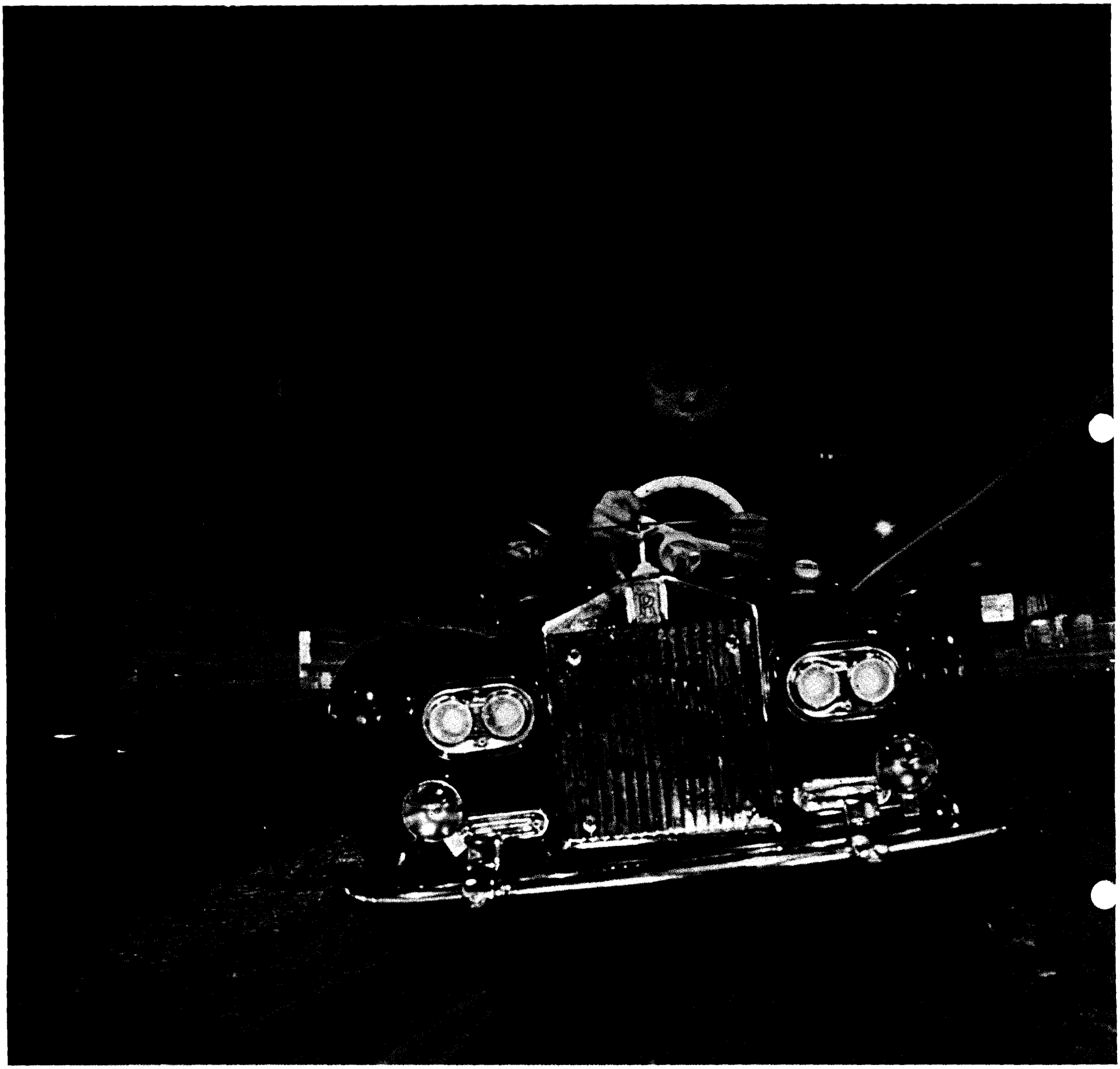
In rich America, what children want, children get—and what 33 million of them between the ages of five and



Is it a man? Is it a car? No, it's Super-Child, an American subteen at the wheel of a $90 Rolls-Royce scale car, headed no doubt to see his broker.

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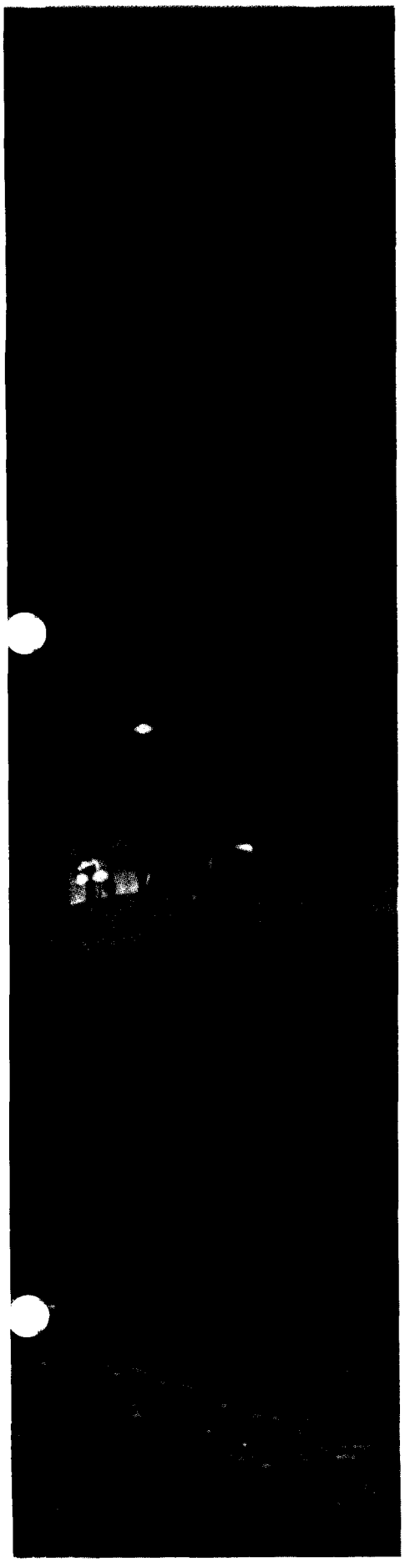
KIDS ARE BIG BUSINESS

THE SMALL-FRY BOOM

12 are getting is a $10 billion share of the wealth.

By RICHARD LEMON

Photographed by John Launois



IT IS A familiar Christmas scene: Dinner is over, and the members of the family are collapsing together. Father is approaching sleep, Mother has let the dishes mount, Aunt and Uncle sag on the sofa, putting off the drive home. And the children are playing with their presents. That green creature with the red eyes and the quivering antennae, which is stalking across the rug and chewing on an earthman—that's Horrible Hamilton. From behind the sofa come the sounds of grenades and rockets: It is the little ones blasting away at each other with their Johnny Seven O.M.A. (One-Man Army) guns. That roaring outdoors—that is young Charlie on his V-Rroom bicycle which simulates a motorcycle. And through it all come the periodic rumblings of Baby Pattaburp, the queasy-looking doll which has drunk milk and is belching its head off.

But why is dear Angela, 12, crying? She has spilled her new nail polish all over her new Leilani print two-piece puckered suit in blue lagoon. What's the matter with Willie? He is all stuck up in his 300 Krazy Labels of Monsters and Weird-Os, and furthermore he is losing the Dogfight game and is imagining all the thrills of real planes being gunned from the sky, the way the television commercial showed it. What are those five explosions? Mother has stepped on the Guerrilla Booby Trap. And why is father heading toward the door? Can it be that he is getting in his car (which was fueled at the Texaco station because a four-dollar toy fire truck was being distributed there) and driving clean away?

Yes it can, but parents who don't anticipate some such gift-wrapped blitz have only themselves to blame. In the year of our Lord, 1964, that's Christmas, baby.

Most adults still like to think of the years from five through 12 as the essence of childhood, a simple time cut off from adult cares. In their reveries, boys still earn money by mowing lawns or pitching newspapers onto front porches. Girls play with lovely dolls in costumes from all over the world. And toys, if not actually made by elves, are lovingly hammered together by a little old man in square spectacles in Switzerland.

It is time for adults to lay aside such fantasies and face the realities, which are astonishing.

There are 33 million American children from five through 12 years old today, which is 17 percent of the U.S. population, and they constitute a market worth at least $10 billion a year. They speak with authority in industries where they once had a small voice, and they influence vast amounts of spending in areas in which they once had no voice at all. The toy industry alone took in close to two billion dollars last year, double the amount it earned 10 years ago, and spent $75 million in advertising; the largest toy maker in the country, Mattel, employs 250 researchers and designers to ponder young consumers' desires. Subteen children every year account for about $110 million worth of records, almost $100 million worth of books, and about three quarters of a million dollars' worth of football helmets. It has been estimated that they influence 15 percent of all food purchases, and 75 percent of the purchases of cakes and soft drinks, and they affect the TV shows adults watch and the cars adults buy. Furthermore, they are getting more precocious all the time. A recent survey by Scholastic Magazines revealed that two thirds of its 12-year-old girl readers wear lipstick and nail polish, while 88 percent of the 12-year-old boys use hair tonic. Surveys indicate that about half of them get an allowance of 50 cents to 75 cents a week—meaning at least half a billion dollars a year in infant spending money. Such studies have been fragmentary so far, but subteen-agers have become so affluent that an advertising agency and a market-research company have recently made specialties out of studying their wants, and the informational gap is being closed fast. As a consumer, the young child has come of age.

The world which subteen money has created is as astonishing as the amounts spent. Some of the areas in which the kiddie consumer is influential:

CAMPS: There are an estimated 9,000 summer camps in the country, and they will gross close to one billion dollars on four and a half million children this summer. One third of the camps are run by youth organizations and charities, but two thirds are private, and they charge between $500 and $1,000 for eight weeks. The camps have grown more elaborate and more education-minded. The lures of present-day camping include heated swimming pools, visiting hairdressers, a trip to the N.Y. World's Fair (from California), slimming for overweights, conversational French and Spanish, science-electronics, math, speed reading, golf, fencing, bowling, go-cart driving, ballet, dramatics, guitar and banjo instruction, music and oil painting.

RECORDS: Subteen-agers account for 45 percent of the 100 million 45-rpm records sold each year, versus 30 percent for teen-agers, and it is impossible to have a hit single without appealing to them. Last August, for the first time in two years, five records sold more than a million copies in a single month. Children 12 and under also buy five

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TV SELLS SOME TOYS BUT NOT ALL

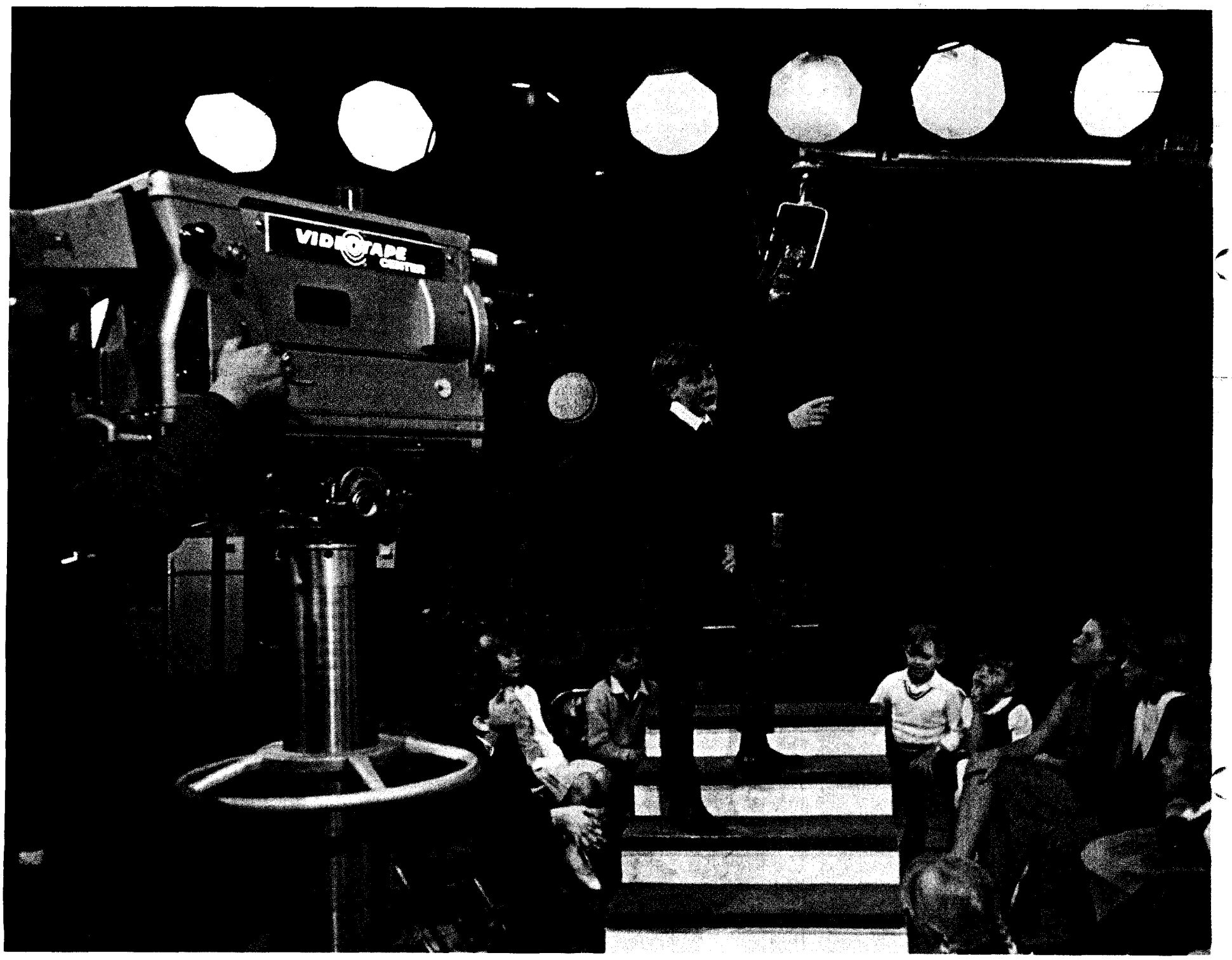
BIG SMALL-FRY BOOM

million long-playing record albums, worth about $20 million a year at retail.

CLOTHING: Eleven- and 12-year-olds are getting steadily more fashion conscious. Sturdy old *Boys' Life* magazine—which is read by an audience in the 10-to-17 age bracket—has been running fashion editorials for two years, and *Vogue* is about to launch a magazine on subteen clothes, although it will be firmly directed toward the parents. Bulky mohair sweaters and stretch pants are big with subteen-age girls, who are selecting more of their own clothes. Salesladies in large suburban shopping centers say that an unescorted young girl will buy stretch pants one or two sizes tighter than a girl who has her mother with her. If the store gets many unaccompanied young girls (usually because a store for the mother is next door), it stocks more daring clothes. "The youngest ones are eleven this year," sighs one saleslady at Bamberger's. "It'll be ten and a half next year." There has been a good deal of public indignation about the young age at which girls are buying brassieres—a size 28AAA is available—but the indignation may be premature. Before the subteen brassiere business can grow further, the innate shyness of the girls will have to be overcome. Macy's last year tried moving its young girls' brassiere line into a more prominent location, but its young customers were so embarrassed that it hastily moved the line back into a secluded corner.

BOOKS: Juvenile books all told grossed $127 million last year, and most publishers now consider juvenile books the backbone of their business. There were 1,059 juvenile titles published in 1950, and almost 3,000 last year, 2,605 of them new. Basic tastes haven't changed much, but the emergence of children's books as big business has brought forth more books that are genuinely imaginative.

TELEVISION: One of the big factors in ABC-TV's dramatic emergence as the No. 1 network in the ratings this year is the fact that many of its nighttime shows appeal to children. The percentage of six-to-11-year-old viewers in the audience for some of the 25 top-rated shows, all of which are on between 7:30 and 9:30 P.M., has been estimated as follows: 22 percent for *Bewitched*, 28 percent for *The Beverly Hillbillies*, 34 percent for *The Munsters*, 23 percent for *The Red Skelton Hour*, 36 percent for *The Patty Duke Show*, 30 percent for *Combat!*, and 41 percent for *The Addams Family*. *The Farmer's Daughter*, featuring the adventures of shapely Inger Stevens, draws an estimated nine million children—by no coincidence, the same number as the preceding *Jonny Quest*, a children's show. So far, advertisers of such shows have



Mark Belsky, a child actor who has made 350 TV commercials, shows other kids how he does it at Cavallaro Productions, an acting school.

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ignored the kiddie viewers. One of *The Farmer's Daughter*'s sponsors is Clairol, which advertises hair coloring to "cover up gray."

OLD FAMILIARS: Subteen children are believed to account for about 13 percent of the movie audience and ticket sales of $110 million a year, although, since the market itself has shrunk, hardly anybody makes movies solely for children any more. The comic-book industry also takes in about $100 million a year, on about 350 million comic books, which is half as many as it sold before horror and sex comics were driven out by public complaint in the early '50's. Among today's most popular comic characters are Dennis the Menace, Archie, and Superman.

It is hard to say whether the booming children's market is cause or effect, but psychiatrists generally agree that the child's world is no longer isolated from the world of the adult. In short, no child is an island any more. Nonetheless, the most amazing thing of all may be that children below teen age remain the least studied and charted of any consumer group. As one manufacturer of sporting equipment says, "We really don't know what's out there."

What seems to be out there is a teeming, assertive mass of kids whose tastes vary widely and are likely to change as quickly as anyone finds out what they are. Advertisers know that children are big on cartoon characters, but the idols change. This year's favorites include Alvin the Chipmunk, Yogi Bear, Superman, and the durable Mickey Mouse. Two years ago, Mr. Magoo was considered a supersalesman for kids, but he is now out—specifically, out selling G.E. bulbs and Libby foods to adults. To mix things up further, surveys show that kids are so diverted by animated-cartoon commercials that they don't pay much attention to the sales pitch. Live actors sell them more effectively.

Then there's sex. One study shows that an ad which features only girls tends to make boys write the product off as girl stuff. On the other hand, girls will happily watch a commercial which shows boys only. Age is another crucial factor. At 10, girls have almost no voice in the choice of their clothes, but by 13 they have most of the say. In the early years, heavy TV viewers tend to be brighter than children who watch less, but at 10 to 13, the bright children watch the least. Finally, manufacturers risk winning one young market at the expense of another. When young children pick up a fad, teen-agers generally drop it.

Faced with this staggering array of variables, manufacturers and advertisers have understandably made some stupendous fluffs and near-fluffs. Colgate-Palmolive's successful children's shampoo, Soaky, was originally going to be called, "Soaky-poo, the fun shampoo," but the company discovered that "poo" had disastrously unpleasant associations for children. It then tested five different names, and "Soaky fun-time shampoo" was the winner. "Soaky play-time shampoo," on the other hand, was much less popular. The reason turned out to be that mothers thought it was OK for children to have fun in their baths, but they didn't want them to play there.

Sometimes, of course, failure can be converted to success. Colgate sold a lot of soap Santa Clauses last year, but got stuck with a lot too. "There's nothing deader than Santa Claus on December 26," says Art Koponen, director of market research. This year, Colgate is going with Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer, and, Koponen says, "after Christmas we'll paint the nose white and call it Bambi or something."

To complicate the kiddie-wooing business still further, the army of children's advertisers, manufacturers and retailers is itself in some disarray. Many owners of small- and medium-size toy stores are disillusioned with the mass-market toy which is promoted by intensive TV advertising, because they cannot compete with large-volume discount houses on such items. Many sales people in the smaller stores last year made a determined effort to switch customers from TV toys to less widely distributed items which the discount houses didn't carry. Sales of TV-promoted toys dropped and they now seem to have leveled off at somewhere between two and seven percent of the total toy business.

The decline of TV-promoted toys is also due to the spate of expensive, frequently misrepresented, and often easily breakable toys which briefly won children's affections through TV commercials in the late '50's. The toy manufacturers now police commercials to be sure they are honest, but the memory lingers on, and advertisers and manufacturers are keenly aware of it.

The complexities of the children's market have only served to spur advertisers on to new depths of research in the new field. Schools give up time and children to market research in return for toys or money. Researchers move across the land in trailers, interviewing and setting up mock stores to test children's reactions to packaging and color. Child psychiatrists pitch in with their observations. As a result, a number of guide lines for child-selling have been developed.

- Children today are better educated and brighter than they used to be. From five through 12, they are growing less influenced by their parents and more influenced by others their own age, which makes them highly susceptible to fads.
- Children respond more to a male than to a female voice, even on doll commercials, and they trust testimonials from their idols. They speak their own language, and hate being patronized. One manufacturer recently paid for a rock-and-roll commercial and complained bitterly that it was unintelligible. But children understood every word. Children also have their own color preferences. They like bright colors like yellow. Also red, white and blue, because of the association with the American flag. They don't like dark, dramatic colors like violet and purple—"the colors of passion," as market researcher Eugene Gilbert puts it.
- Most important of all, children like to control and master things, and they must be made participants in an ad.

Good and Plenty, an old-time candy maker which wanted to expand its kiddie trade, recently hired Helitzer, Waring & Wayne, an advertising agency specializing in children, to prepare a campaign. Saul Waring explained how his firm had put its advertising principles to work.

"The campaign is based on a word called 'oodles.'" Waring said. "We have called the little pieces of candy 'oodles,' and you get oodles and oodles of them. On the back of the package you get guides to a language we call 'oodle talk.' You just add 'oodle' to a word. 'It's f-oodle-un. Elev-oodle-ator. Eleph-oodle-ant.'" Waring smiled significantly. "We've tested it on the children and they think it's a riot," he went on. "At first we were going to put the 'oodle' after the first consonant group—'sw-oodle-im.' But the children kept saying 'swim-oodle.' We decided, why restrict them? Let them put it where they want to. We've used rhyme, we've used rhythm. We've used animation, and live children. And we've provided fun that they can be involved in."

By far the stickiest problem in trying to win the kiddie dollar is the parent, who is quick to resent a blatant pitch to his young. A number of advertisers have managed to put children to work for them in areas where the parent traditionally bears sole judgment, but it is a risky business. Three years ago, Miles Laboratories started advertising its chewable vitamin, Chocks, direct to children. The company soon discovered that 64 percent of the young viewers of its shows asked their mothers to buy Chocks, and 38 percent of the mothers obliged. Chocks itself became virtually synonymous with pleasant, chewable vitamins—both for parents who liked the idea and parents who didn't. But several of Chocks' competitors are now attempting to cut into its market by playing on parental fears that any vitamin which a child likes to chew can't be very strong stuff. "Careful, Ma'am, is that a full-potency chewable vitamin?" a Zestabs announcer asks a mother who is popping her child a chewable vitamin, and launches into a demonstration of the strength of Zestabs.

The question of parental resistance is even more acute in areas where the parent is a fellow user of the product, or even the primary user. Texaco has sold some two million of its four-dollar fire trucks, and presumably a lot of gas at the same time. This year it has brought out a red plastic fire helmet equipped with microphone and speaker, and it already has orders for more than a million. Subteen children are also considered a potent force in the automobile industry, where they push their parents toward sportier models. Nonetheless, many experts counsel caution in interpreting this force.

"If a kid said, 'I want car X,' the father wouldn't necessarily buy it," Eugene Gilbert says. "But if the son says, 'Car Y is an old man's car, all the kids' fathers have car X,' it might be very influential. Kids are important in a negative way."

"Children are a wonderful entrée for getting a product into the house," Saul Waring says. "But you have to be careful. Parents don't like somebody telling their children to 'Go tell Mom to buy this.'"

Nonetheless, Mom is often obedient.

Children model subteen fashions with Lego-constructed replicas of famous buildings.

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Adman Mel Helitzer surrounded by Monster Plaques. He specializes in selling to children.

FIGURING CHILDREN'S TASTES IS LIKE KEEPING A FEVER CHART ON EACH NEW FAD

BIG SMALL-FRY BOOM

In one study, 65 percent of the mothers interviewed said their children had a great deal of influence on their dry-cereal buying, and 25 percent said they had some influence, for a total of 90 percent. Sixty-four percent admitted child influence on popcorn buying, and 82 percent on cakes and cookies. Clearly, an entrée like that is not going to be passed up. Among the products that Waring's partner, Mel Helitzer, thinks can be sold through children: insurance, electric clocks, tape recorders and color-TV sets.

The effect of all this on the child himself is uncertain—almost no studies have been made—but some psychiatrists deplore the conflict of authority which such advertising can create. When an adult in a commercial tells a child that pill X is the best there is, and the parent then says that pill X is no good, psychiatrists say that the effect is confusing, at least.

The industry most aligned with the children's market, of course, is the toy industry, and it has experienced drastic changes during the past 10 years. The company most responsible for these changes is probably Mattel, the California manufacturer of V-Rroom bikes and Barbie dolls. Its marketing director is Cliff Jacobs, a short, peppery, balding man who recently talked about the evolution of toys.

"Until ten years ago, the toy industry was small and compact—mostly Mom-and-Pop companies," Jacobs said. "The toy manufacturer came up with some new idea, made it as cheaply as he could, threw it in a box and sold it to the retailer. Mattel was the first to hire qualified designers, engineers, dreamers. Then we found one secret: television as a means of reaching a tremendous group. We found we had grabbed a tiger by the tail. We had that black box selling to kids, and we had to go to our design groups and say, 'Crank it out, boys, we can't keep up. Triple your output, quadruple it.' We told the retailer, 'Buy it early, stock it heavy, and put a sign in the window so that after they see it on television, they'll know where they can buy it.'

"We got concerned with packaging and display, because there was a shortage of sales help. We said, 'You don't need fancy shelves. You can stack the things up, and what you save on sales help you can pass on to the customer.' We took the toy out of that damned corrugated brown box and made it visible, by means of modern packaging. Every package is its own salesman. We helped the toy industry grow up."

Mattel, all grown up, today holds frequent sales clinics with jobbers and retailers. It spent half a million dollars researching the girls' clothing field before bringing out a line of Barbie clothes for real girls this fall, and the line will be in 2,500 stores by spring. The company is spending more than nine million dollars on advertising this year, and its TV policy is what it calls "wall-to-wall programming." It sponsors shows on each one of the three networks from 11 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. every Saturday, and on the 13 Saturdays preceding Christmas it has had nine out of 10 toy commercials on the networks between 10:30 A.M. and 12:30 P.M. Last year, Mattel grossed almost $97 million. This year it is betting heavily on the V-Rroom line. "It's adding a new dimension to toys with wheels," Jacobs says. "A kid on a bicycle is not on a bicycle any more—he's on his own motorcycle." It is also banking on the boom in war toys, now in its third year, with items like a snub-nosed .38 and the Guerrilla Gun. "Kids demand realism," Jacobs says, cheerfully. "It's a tie-in with what's going on around the world. Bang-bang—you're in Vietnam."

Another man who claims credit for maturing the toy business is independent toy designer Marvin Glass. A University of Chicago graduate, Glass lives in a Chicago mansion, works in a dumpy office, gets advances of $200,000 on his ideas, and also collects retainers, as an evaluator of other people's toys, of $1,000 a day, plus expenses. His inventions include Mr. Machine, Mousetrap (a game in the form of a Rube Goldberg contraption), Rock 'Em and Sock 'Em (two robots who slug it out) and Time Bomb (a game like musical chairs, only with a play bomb). Glass has three ex-wives—one of whom he married twice—he works all the time, and he says he is a very unhappy, unsatisfied man. The idea for Mr. Machine was born when one of his ex-wives yelled at him on the telephone, "You're nothing but a machine!"

"Mr. Machine set the trend of heavy television advertising," Glass says, sounding mournful. "Mousetrap and Time Bomb have revolutionized the game industry by taking games off the flat board. It may sound complacent, but we also invented the concept of the professional toy designer. It was in the hands of amateurs. Now at least 70 or 80 organizations devote at least part of their time to designing toys."

Glass's current enthusiasm is group-play toys. "With Time Bomb," he says, "you can get eight or nine children together, and in a little while you have a cohesive play group." He is veering away from the Mr. Machine concept. "The trend now is to create toys that are a little less high-priced than the TV toys and that have a year-round sale. We're trying to get away from the six-week selling period. I suppose the phrase could be misconstrued, but I think the objective is to take Christmas out of the toy business."

But for real, eye-opening evolution, it is hard to beat the game of "Life," which was invented by Milton Bradley in 1860 and was America's first board game. In the original, a player moved over squares labeled, Truth, Honor, Disgrace, Intemperance, and Industry, either winding up on Ruin or becoming a model citizen and reaching Happy Old Age. In the current version, the player begins with $2,000 and a car, has a chance to borrow heavily and win a million dollars, and winds up in the Poor Farm or on Millionaire's Acres. "This world of ours," notes 75-year-old President James Shea, "has become much more materialistic."

Despite the new look of much of the children's market, many of its changes are simply new manifestations of old tastes. Probably the biggest new industry in the market is the model-racing-car business, which, in five years, has gone from virtually nonexistent to a gross business of $100 million a year. The boom is partly the result of the diminished role of trains in American life; model cars have now passed model trains in popularity.

In a survey of nine- to 12-year-olds by *Junior Catholic Messenger* magazine, three quarters of the boys said they built models, and two thirds listed models and model racing as their favorite hobby. The biggest company in the model field is Revell, a Venice, Calif., outfit which makes intricate and accurate model kits for cars, ships, and airplanes. Revell's president, Lew Glaser, says that most of his customers are using their allowance money, not getting a present, and that they are highly particular. "The kids read *Jane*'s *Fighting Ships*, and they're quick to spot the smallest mistake," he says. Revell's models of the B-25 and the *Missouri* are the hottest selling models in Japan. "They were familiar," Glaser explains. "That seems to be a major factor."

Like model-building, many other fads today have their roots firmly in the past. The hottest fad in recent years was the simple Yo-Yo, which was imported from Hawaii in 1928 by one Donald F. Duncan. In 1960, Donald F. Duncan Inc. decided to try advertising on television. Its sales shot from about 900,000 to 6.8 million in one year, and the venerable Yo-Yo was the year's biggest selling toy. Roller-skate sales have been declining for years—but the biggest fad on the West Coast this year is the skate-board, a tiny surfboard on roller skates. Even the bicycle field has a fad: the buzz bike, imported from Hawaii, where it is used on the beaches. Buzz bikes feature a small front wheel, a small but fat (two and a half inches wide) rear wheel, high handlebars and a long seat. Then there is the Wishnik, originally called the Dam-thing, a grimacing plastic figure created by a Dane named Robert Dam in the image of legendary Danish trolls. The troll is now made by the Uneeda Doll Co., and

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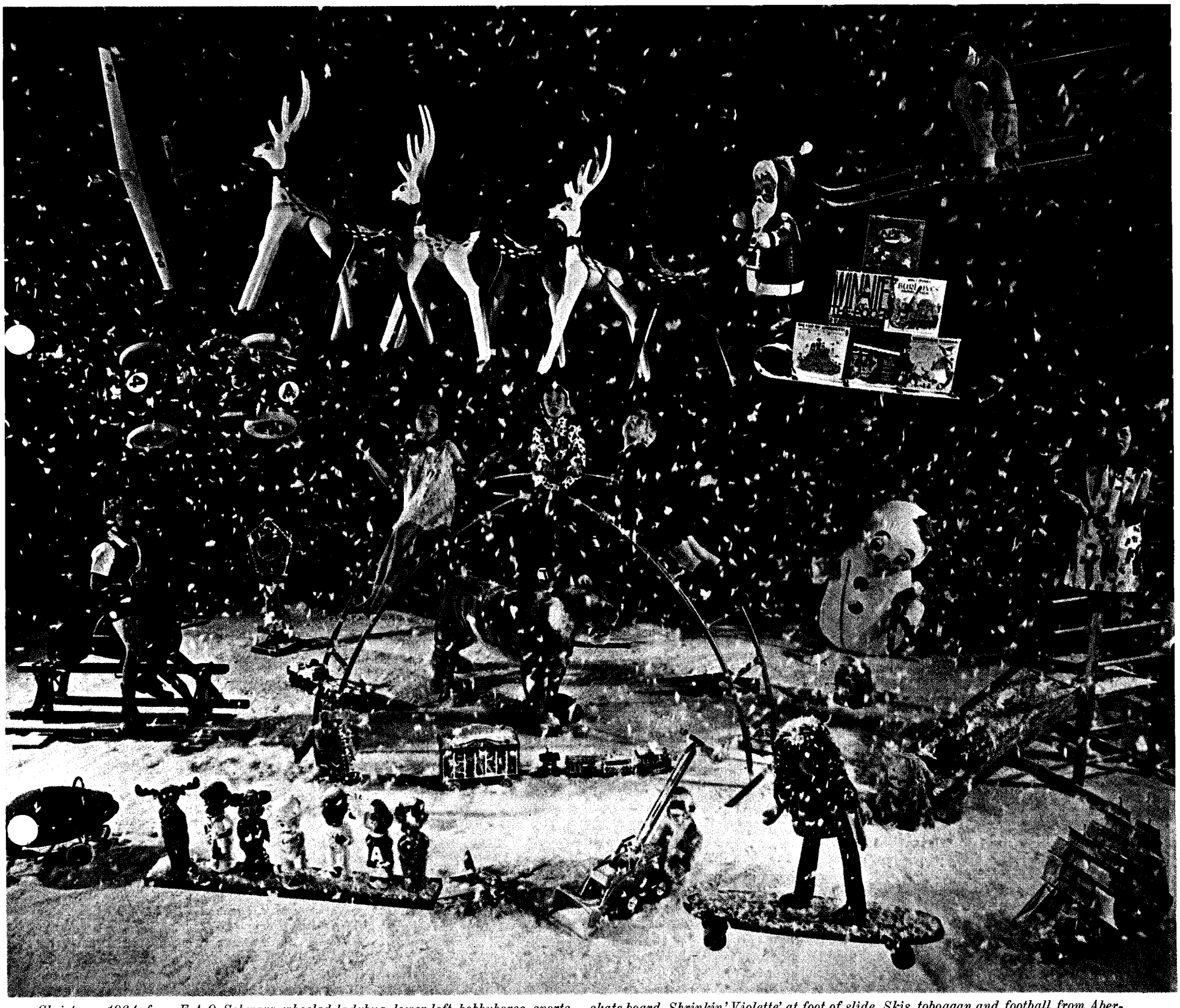
over three million have been sold this year without benefit of advertising.

One of the most argued, and least settled, questions raised by the burgeoning children's market is whether the child of today is overprivileged. Most well-to-do mothers today spend less on their children's clothes than they would have a generation ago. Stores like Bergdorf Goodman say customers want clothes that can withstand the pressures of the child and the washing machine, while the children themselves want less expensive clothes, but more of them. Nonetheless, the children's luxury market has hardly dried up. "Within one recent spell of ten days," says Charles Veysey, president of F.A.O. Schwarz, a famous Fifth Avenue toy store, "we have sold a $295 reindeer, a $695 train table, and a $350 bear." Schwarz has also introduced an electric, child-size Rolls-Royce for $90. Uncle Bernie's Toy Menagerie, in Beverly Hills, carries a three-horse-power Model-T Ford for $400, and owner Henry Sherman says he sells about fifteen a year. Lionel, its train business shrinking, has come out with an ingenious, miniature, passenger balloon which is filled with helium, is controlled by one wire, and sells for about $25. Children now get "a healthy share" of the horseback riding business, according to one large riding-equipment maker, and there are sets of miniature golf clubs for $100. Creative Playthings, one of the leading makers of educational toys, has a 15-inch-high Ferris-wheel truck for $36.25. Abercrombie & Fitch has a little steam cabinet for $500, and Sulka has custom-made boys' shirts for $40 and cashmere sport coats for $800. And for the child who has everything, The Incurable Collector, in New York, has a bronze figure of a colt, designed for children, for $1,500, and a Henry Barraud painting of a cocky little boy astride a horse, for $7,500. A grandmother from Houston is currently thinking of buying it for her grandson. The mother is arguing that that is too much to spend on a child. The grandmother's counter-argument is that you're only young once.

Whether they are overprivileged or not, today's children are destined to grow even more affluent and powerful. When they achieve teenhood, they will find themselves the richest group in the country in terms of money available for non-essentials. Today's teen-agers, with 12 percent of the population and an income of $12 billion a year, have the power to set most of today's mass-buying trends. When the five-through-12 crowd gets to teen age, it will probably have an income of about $20 billion. Its members will have one other advantage over teen-agers today. They will be seasoned shoppers. THE END



Christmas, 1964: from F.A.O. Schwarz, wheeled ladybug, lower left, hobbyhorse, sports car and U-2 plane above; also children's records, stuffed animals. Reindeer and Santa by Ideal; also snowman, right center, model boat and saxophone player, left center. V-Rroom shovel pickup, center, by Mattel; also Scooba-Doo, talking beatnik doll on skate board, Shrinkin' Violette' at foot of slide. Skis, toboggan and football from Abercrombie & Fitch. Train and circus wagon, center, by Fisher-Price. Soakies by Colgate-Palmolive. Cutty Sark, right by Revell. Climber, center, and slide at right by Creative Playthings. Girls' Barbie dresses by Mattel; ski outfit and boys' clothes by Merry Mites.

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By Roger Garis

Roger Garis wrote "perhaps 80" juveniles.

MY FATHER WAS 'UNCLE WIGGILY'

FOUR MEMBERS OF AN EXTRAORDINARY FAMILY PRODUCED MOST OF THE BOOKS READ BY GENERATIONS OF AMERICAN CHILDREN. BUT FATHER WAS BEST LOVED FOR WRITING THE 'UNCLE WIGGILY' STORIES.

The way I learned that there were four of us in the family writing books was by hearing the sound of a strange typewriter in action as I entered our house one afternoon.

I recognized easily the clickety-clack of my father's machine, pounding out an Uncle Wiggily story, or possibly a Tom Swift. ("Look to your guns, everybody!" cautioned Mr. Durban, who had gone to Africa with Tom to search for elephant tusks. "It's no joke to be caught in an elephant herd with an unloaded rifle!") I heard my mother's typewriter, probably writing a Bobbsey Twins, or a Connie Loring. (I myself was in the middle of *The Outboard Boys at Pirate Beach.*)

But that other typewriter?

I soon found out. It belonged to my sister, Cleo, and she was beginning a series of girls' mystery stories for A. L. Burt Company.

Looking back some 35 years to that big, rambling house in East Orange, N.J., it seems fantastic that the four of us—my father, my mother, my sister and I—produced most of the juveniles and children's books that generations of youngsters consumed more avidly than any breakfast food. My father, Howard R. Garis, wrote at least 500; my mother, Lilian Garis, 200 or 300; my sister, now Mrs. John J. Clancy of South Orange, about 20 (she married before the disease took firm hold); and I did perhaps 80.

Sitting now in the study of my home in Amherst, Mass., I can see spilled over the floor behind my desk about 50 of the books we wrote, which I bought yesterday in an old bookstore in Northampton. The storekeeper told me: "The kids aren't going to like you taking those books. They come in here, buy a few, sell 'em back to me, and buy some more!"

So they still read them. It is nice to know that, even with television, kids still do read *Larry Dexter, Reporter; Gloria, a Girl and Her Dad; The Outboard Boys at Mystery Island; The Bobbsey Twins in the Country; Tom Swift and His Electric Rifle;* and Uncle Wiggily—always and ever, Uncle Wiggily.

It was in Roseville, a residential section of Newark, N.J., that Uncle Wiggily was born in 1910. Since then, stories about the rabbit gentleman with the tall silk hat and the barber-pole-striped crutch have spanned oceans and been translated into many languages. Uncle Wiggily has, in fact, become part of the folklore of the nation. At my father's death two years ago at the age of 89—he and my mother spent their last years with us here in Amherst—the sale of the Uncle Wiggily books was approaching 18 million.

Negotiations are now being concluded for the presentation of Uncle Wiggily on television. Live actors will play the parts of the characters—Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat lady who kept house for Uncle Wiggily in the Hollow Stump Bungalow; Johnnie and Billie Bushytail, the squirrel boys; Sammie and Susie Littletail, the rabbit children; Uncle Butter, the goat; Jackie and Peetie Bow Wow, the puppy dogs; Bully and Bawley No-tail, the frog boys. And, of course, the bad old Pipsisewah, the mean old Skeezicks, and the Skillery Scallery Alligator, who will be after Uncle Wiggily to nibble his ears.

My father would love to have seen his creations come into being on television. I have never known any other man like him. For all practical purposes he *was* Uncle Wiggily. When danger threatened—in the form of financial crises, sickness in the family, problems with his two growing children—he'd say, "Oh, hum suz-duz and a basket of carrots—let's not worry. It will come out all right in the end." And it did—*always!*

My father was a happy man. Of course he had difficulties, but he made them minor difficulties—which is not the same as the difficulties themselves being minor. His philosophy—which became Uncle Wiggily's—was simply not to admit that any hardship or disaster was serious enough to become discouraged about.

He was an extremely kind man. One of the few things which truly disturbed him was to see anyone oppressed or downcast. He would go into a store to buy, say, a bottle of milk, and because the salesman appeared disconsolate, my father would come home laden with all sorts of food my mother did not need in the least—because the large purchase cheered up the clerk.

I remember vividly one incident. After the success of Uncle Wiggily raised our standard of living, we decided to buy a piano. My father said he would go to Steinway's and make inquiries.

I shall never forget the sight of my mother's face that day when I came home from school. She was sitting in a chair, white as the antimacassar.

"What's the matter?" I asked anxiously. "Didn't Dad buy the piano?"

"Buy the piano?" my mother responded brokenly. "Buy the piano? The clerk needed the commission to pay his rent—so your father bought *two* pianos!"

Of course one of them went back. But my father wasn't pleased about it.

He was born in Binghamton, N.Y., April 25, 1873, the son of a railroad telegrapher, and his earliest home consisted of rooms over a railroad station. His father, Simeon Garis, was frequently shifted from one station to another along the Erie Lackawanna Railroad, taking his family with him. Such a bouncy life didn't help my father's schooling. Every once in a while he had to quit classes, to help with the family finances. When he was 16, he got a job in the baggage office of the Erie Lackawanna Railroad—and there he wrote his first novel, *A World Without Women.*

"I was mad at a girl because she wouldn't go out with me," he explained. "I *hated* women—at sixteen." It ran to 400 pages, and my father took it to Harper's—telling them to toss it in the wastebasket if it wasn't any good. They did.

He refused to give up. He wrote short stories, poems, two other novels—and finally *Arthur's Magazine* took a poem and gave him a subscription to the magazine in payment. "That," said my father, "was one of the biggest days in my life. I became a published author."

When my father was 20, Grandfather Simeon died, and the support of his mother and two sisters fell upon the son. He worked at one makeshift job after another, the last of these being with a company that made rubber coverings for the tops of typewriter keys. And it was at this point that his fortunes began to change. He wrote a few short pieces for a weekly called *Town Talk*, the owner of which was Thomas Edward Burke, city editor of the Newark *Evening News.* My father asked Burke for a job as a cub reporter. Two weeks later he received a postcard from Burke: "Report for work Monday

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On his 88th birthday, in Amherst, Mass., Howard R. Garis delighted crowds of adoring children with more stories of "Uncle Wiggily."

morning." That was my father's real start as a professional writer.

I was too young to remember him writing his early books, but I recall two, *The Isle of Black Fire*, and *The White Crystals*, the latter placing second in the Harper prize contest for the best juvenile of that year. It was dedicated "To my son, Roger." As though I'd forget that!

He would write his books at night, after he came home from work. So that his typing would not awaken my sister or me—both of us hardly more than infants then—my father would put a pillow under the typewriter.

"Every once in a while the keys would get tangled up with the pillow," my father told us later. "The struggle to get them untangled provided stimulation for some of my best scenes."

When he'd been on the *News* for some time, and had published a number of books for boys, the publisher of the *News*, Wallace M. Scudder, came to him.

"Howard," he said, "how would you like to write some animal stories for the paper? Kids like animals, and they'd make a nice feature."

My father said he'd think it over. On Saturdays or Sundays he used to take a trolley from Newark to Verona, about an hour's ride, and then get out and walk through the woods. Thinking about Mr. Scudder's suggestion, my father one Sunday sat down on a log in the woods bordering Verona.

Across from him was another log. Suddenly a rabbit poked his head up. My father remained still. The rabbit wiggled one long ear. My father didn't move. Then the rabbit wiggled his other ear. This time my father gave a yelp, and the rabbit hopped wildly away.

"That's it!" my father cried. "That's my rabbit! Wiggily ears! Long, wiggily ears! Uncle—Wiggily—Longears!"

So the famous rabbit with the long ears and twinkling nose, the tall silk hat and barber-pole-striped rheumatism crutch was created. My father wrote the first two stories that night, and Mr. Scudder loved them. He wanted them to appear daily.

Dubiously, my father said he'd try for a month. He wasn't at all sure that he could keep the stories going that long. Where would the plots come from?

I think he never really knew where the plots *did* come from. But the month stretched into a year, and the year into two years, and then into 50 years: a story a day, syndicated and appearing in hundreds of newspapers throughout the country—over 15,000 separate stories in all. Of course, my father wrote more than one a day. Frequently he would write a week's supply at one sitting.

From the first the stories were popular, and in five years my father had become famous. But writing about Uncle Wiggily was not enough for my father. His enormous energy required further outlet.

Not far from us, in Roseville, lived Edward Stratemeyer. Mr. Stratemeyer was a slender, middle-aged writer with tremendous drive, imagination, and a remarkable business sense. He had made a hit with his Rover Boys—they sold in the hundreds of thousands—and his other books. These included the Bound to Succeed series, War and Adventure stories, the Colonial series, and many others.

One day Edward Stratemeyer phoned my father. They had a conference. Out of that conference, the first of many, came the juveniles which swept America.

It is difficult to divide properly the credit for the success of The Motor Boys, Tom Swift, Baseball Joe, The Bobbsey Twins, and the other famous juveniles. Stratemeyer conceived most of the titles, and suggested many of the basic plots. My father—and, later on, my mother, my sister and I—wrote the original books.

After the books were written, we turned them over to Stratemeyer, and he had them published by various publishing firms—mostly Grosset & Dunlap—paying us flat sums for the books.

I think we all enjoyed writing the books for Mr. Stratemeyer. We lived the characters, even though they were for the juvenile market. It is amazing how excited one can get saving a character from the Caves of Ice, with a whole tribe of Indians about to attack!

As the stories emerged from my father's typewriter—spliced in with his Uncle Wiggily stories, science-fiction tales, and an occasional novel or article—Mr. Stratemeyer suggested that my mother, who had written many girls' books under her own name, write some books for him.

So began the Bobbsey Twins. As I recall, Mr. Stratemeyer suggested the pen names under which the books were written. The Motor Boys author was Clarence Young. The Tom Swifts, Victor Appleton. The Bobbsey Twins, Laura Lee Hope. There were many others, whose names I have forgotten, as I have forgotten even the names of the books we wrote.

I began my own writing practically from the crib—who could help it, in a family like that?—with unpublished poems

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and short stories. Then when I became old enough—about 17, as I recall—to qualify as a more or less professional writer, Mr. Stratemeyer asked me if I would care to write for him. I'm not sure just how many books I wrote for Mr. Stratemeyer, but I remember how they came to be written. He would phone, and ask if I could stop to see him. We'd sit in the dining room of his home in Newark—a pleasant house, but unpretentious. Mr. Stratemeyer would have a brief plot outlined on a sheet of paper. I'd sit at the table with him, and we'd go over it. I would make suggestions, and he would make suggestions, and when I left, an hour or so later, I would have a pretty good idea what the book was to be about. My father and mother worked with him the same way.

What was our family life like—with the four of us banging out books by the carload? Well, we met together at meals—that I remember. And we went on outings together. And when my father bought his first automobile—a Stearns-Knight—we went on rides. We vacationed on the Jersey shore each summer. We had good times. So I guess we were pretty normal.

Except—there were lots of silences. Not uncomfortable silences. Not don't-anyone-talk-to-me silences. Just easy, accepted silences during which each of us floated off into his or her own private world of saving Buddy from the Dragon Swamp; or playing at Meadow Brook with Freddie and Flossie, the younger of the two pairs of Bobbsey Twins; or foiling Noddy Nixon, the *bête noir* of The Motor Boys; or adrift in a houseboat with Warren Finn and Terry Blondel.

They weren't dreamy silences. Anything but that. They were productive silences—silences during which much of our work was done, when we'd be plotting the next move of Larry Dexter, who went from Office Boy to Reporter; or deciding what was in the envelope that helped old Doctor Possum save Nurse Jane Fuzzy Wuzzy, the muskrat-lady housekeeper for Uncle Wiggily, from what she thought were measles, but which turned out to be only strawberry marks.

When the problems were solved, we'd talk—usually all of us at once. Sometimes one of us couldn't figure out the present problem—who, for example, was really Barbara Hale's Mystery Friend? Barbara was mother's current heroine. It had to be someone, with the title of the book already announced.

My father was the one who settled these literary crises. He'd think for a minute—and then pop up with the answer. And it would be right, the logical solution. Many felt that my mother actually was a better writer than my father. She was, in fact, more poetic—her poems were printed in many magazines and newspapers, and I still have one, which appeared in the New York *Herald* on Sunday, July 24, 1904, called *The Breezy Bathing Girl;* it was illustrated by a full page color picture, and ended:

"*Laugh, and useless words repeat,*
Maiden fair, maiden fair!
Of these tempting shores beware.
Flowers gathered from the crest
Only live on summer's breast."

If my mother used words with more poetic effect, my father used them more as arrows—to hit the target in the center. He understood that stories must *move*—and, for youngsters, must move constantly and rapidly. These principles were carried out in all his work—each Uncle Wiggily story utilized the technique employed in all good fiction: problem, suspense, a climax, a solution. So with his other books: The Daddy series, Rick and Ruddy, Tom Cardiff series, Tam of the Fire Cave, Tufto the Clown series, the Buddy series, Chad of Knob Hill, the two Wild Cherries series, the Teddy books, the Dick Hamilton series, the Curley Tops—a complete list would fill a catalogue.

My mother ceased her writing around her 75th year—she died in Amherst several years before my father. But my father continued his Uncle Wiggily stories almost to the very day he died. His life with us in Amherst was, I think, one of his happiest times. Everyone in town knew him, and the children would wait for him when, on warm days, he would sit on a bench in the Common, and tell them about Uncle Wiggily.

Among his friends was the poet Robert Frost, who used to visit with us when he was in Amherst. He and my father looked remarkably alike, and they had the same quiet, secure philosophy of life. A neighbor told us that one day a group of children were waiting for my father on a corner, when Mr. Frost came down the street. The children, excited, began to chant: "It's Uncle Wiggily! It's Uncle Wiggily!" Then, as the stroller came nearer and they saw who it was, one exclaimed disconsolately, "Aw, it's only Robert Frost!"

This was one of Mr. Frost's favorite anecdotes.

There was a time when my father became ill. This was unheard of—he was never ill. In his 80's he remained strong and vital. But the doctor ordered him into the hospital, and for some reason my father was convinced that this was the end. And since he did, we did too.

My wife and I went to the hospital to see him. He seemed to be asleep as we stood on either side of his bed. I said gently, "Dad," and the eyelids flickered. My wife touched his hand. The lips stirred. "Hello," my father whispered. "Hello, Mabie"—he had always called her that, an affectionate form of Mabel; to me she was Mab. There seemed to come to him then one of those moments of clarity which illuminate finalities. We saw him raise his arms as though he would embrace us, or bless us.

"I want to thank you," he said, "for all you have done for me." We knew, then, that he was saying good-bye.

"Gramp," Mab said, "We have done nothing. You have done it all by being with us."

Outside, from beneath the partly lowered shade, we could see the haze of oncoming dusk. My father's head moved as though he, too, wished to watch the day depart. It might be the last time he would see a twilight.

As long as I could recall, my father had loved nature in all its manifestations. He would climb a hill to observe a sunset. He would stand at a window looking with awe and delight at tumbling, uprushing thunderclouds.

"Perhaps," I whispered to Mab, "we'd better go. He may sleep a bit. They'll call us if there's any change."

Silently we made ready to leave. My wife stood for a moment looking down at the tired face. She touched the forehead with her lips. There were tears in her eyes. I took her hand and we turned toward the door to leave.

Just then a nurse came into the room carrying a stack of Manila envelopes, but we scarcely noticed her. We were too full of the ache of farewell. It was not until she said, "These are for Mr. Garis," and laid them on a table, that Mab and I became curious.

"What do you suppose these are?" Mab murmured. "They're like manuscript envelopes!"

I picked up one of the envelopes. It was bulging. My wife picked up another. She opened it. "It's full of letters and drawings," she said, wonderingly. "They look as though they'd been done by children." She held up one of the drawings. It was a sprawling picture of a rabbit, and under it was scrawled, "Dere Uncle Wiggily, get well soon, I love you, Rita Raznik, second grade, Amity Street School."

Amity Street School was not far from where we lived. My wife took out another drawing of a rabbit with a hat from which the ears protruded. She read the message: "We hear you're sick, so get well fast, Maureen Russell, Susan Hannigan, Barbara Renaud."

My father's eyes suddenly opened. "What?" he whispered. "What was that?"

"These messages," Mab said. "They're from children." She spilled the contents of the envelopes on his bed. Letters on children's lined paper, penciled sketches, cutouts covered the bedspread. She opened a second envelope. More messages, more drawings. My father raised his head a little. "Are they *all* from children?" he asked, his voice astonishingly eager. "And they're all for me?"

"Every one," my wife told him. She started to pin some of the drawings to a screen. Aware now that something very strange was happening here, I helped her. The room was becoming changed from a bare hospital room into a unique picture gallery. Some of the smaller notes and pictures my wife and I propped up on the windowsill. We pinned up the others until the screen was covered. Even that did not exhaust the supply. There seemed to be hundreds from children all over the area who had learned of his illness.

I looked at my father. He was trying to hold himself up on one elbow. "How did they get here?" he asked. His voice seemed stronger.

We told him the children must have left them at the desk downstairs. Mab read some more of the messages. "'I like best Uncle Wiggily and the Airship. Love from Karen Louise Beth.' 'What holds up a train? Bandits. Your true friend Shelley Timberlake.'" One rose-colored display was at least four feet square, with a picture of Uncle Wiggily's Hollow Stump Bungalow, "From Miss Katra's Sixth Grade."

By the time the last envelope had been opened the room was transformed. All about were the notes, drawings, messages to the man who had created Uncle Wiggily—who, in the minds of millions of children, *was* Uncle Wiggily. I could feel poignantly, as I knew my wife could, the aura of love which arched within the room like a rainbow. I thought that the children, forbidden in the hospital because of the danger to them of infection, had nevertheless found a way to enter and be with the man who had brought them pleasure.

Half an hour later we left. My father, partly supported by his pillow, was staring at the display with amazed eyes. Some of the grayness, some of the submissiveness, had gone from his face.

When I called the hospital the next morning I was told that my father had a restful night. The nurse who spoke seemed puzzled. "He's so much stronger," she said. "We were sure . . . " She broke off, and then in the correct official tone: "Your father is doing nicely."

And so my father did not die. He recovered completely and lived for other years, and for other stories. And I wondered: What was it he gave to children, that they should return to him the gift of life? THE END

"Where'd the car break down?"

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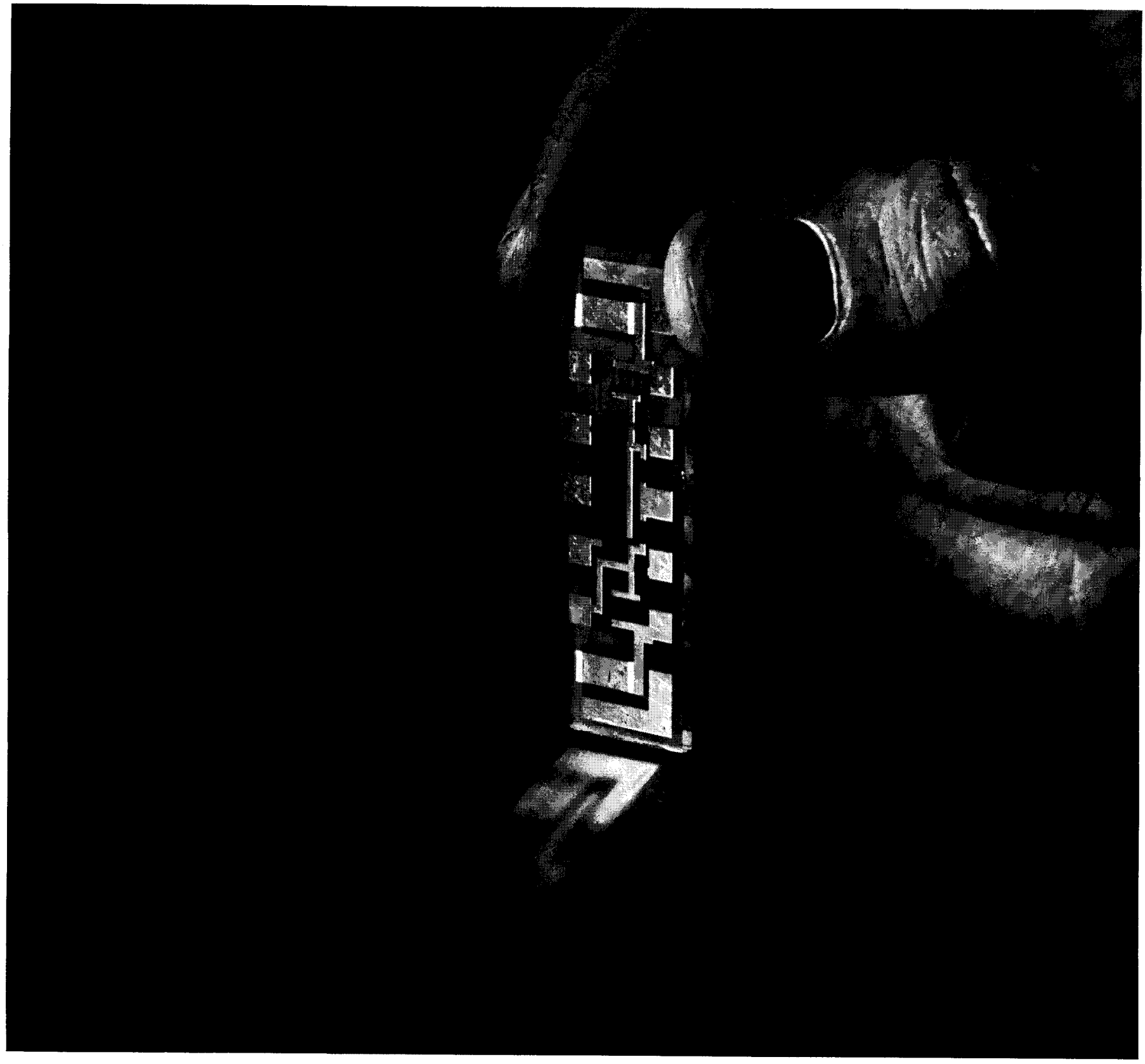

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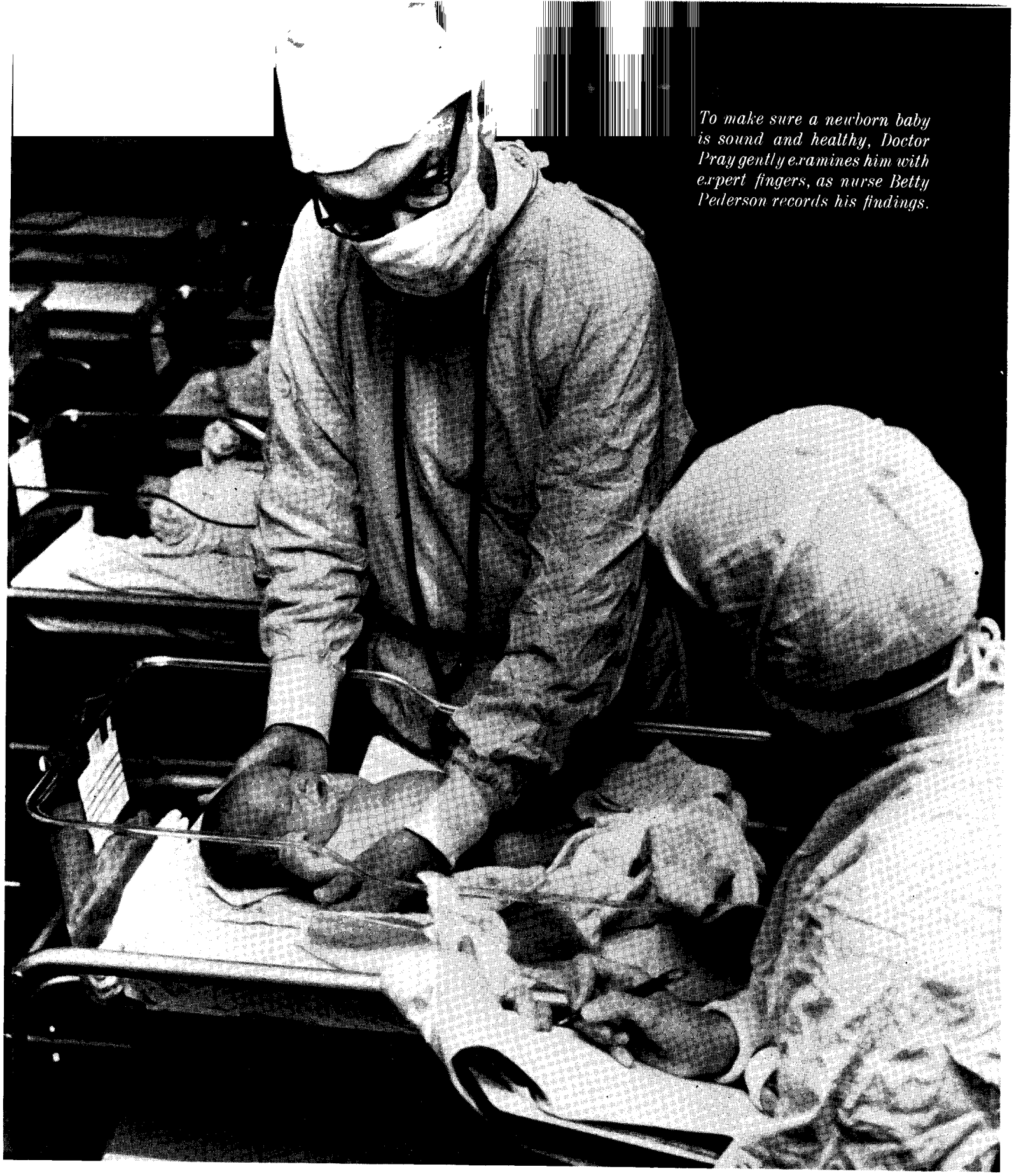

To make sure a newborn baby is sound and healthy, Doctor Pray gently examines him with expert fingers, as nurse Betty Pederson records his findings.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A PEDIATRICIAN

By Pete Hamill

He must be quick of eye and gentle of hand to save and comfort small ones, but his reward is deep.

In Fargo, N. Dak. (pop. 50,000), the moment of dawn is as unspectacular as the town. The sun labors quietly across the vast, empty northern plains, its first rays tepid and oblique, until night surrenders without a struggle to day. It is the kind of town Sherwood Anderson might have written about, or Edward Hopper might paint. It is a town where childhood holds no visible terrors, where stealing apples has not yet given way to the flash of switchblades. It is living testimony to the unspectacular virtues of life in the American Midwest.

The sunrise had been no different one recent morning when a 60-year-old pediatrician named Laurence Gesner Pray awoke in his rambling, red-brick ranchhouse. Winter was blowing in from Canada, and by 7:45 when he got ready to leave for work, he said that it looked like snow. "We don't get much snow here," he said, pulling on a black overcoat and hat. "Too cold. Sometimes we wish we had more. It would keep the topsoil from blowing away."

The doctor picked up his black bag, and walked into his two-car garage. Two Buicks, one green, the other black, gleamed in the dim

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LARRY FRIED

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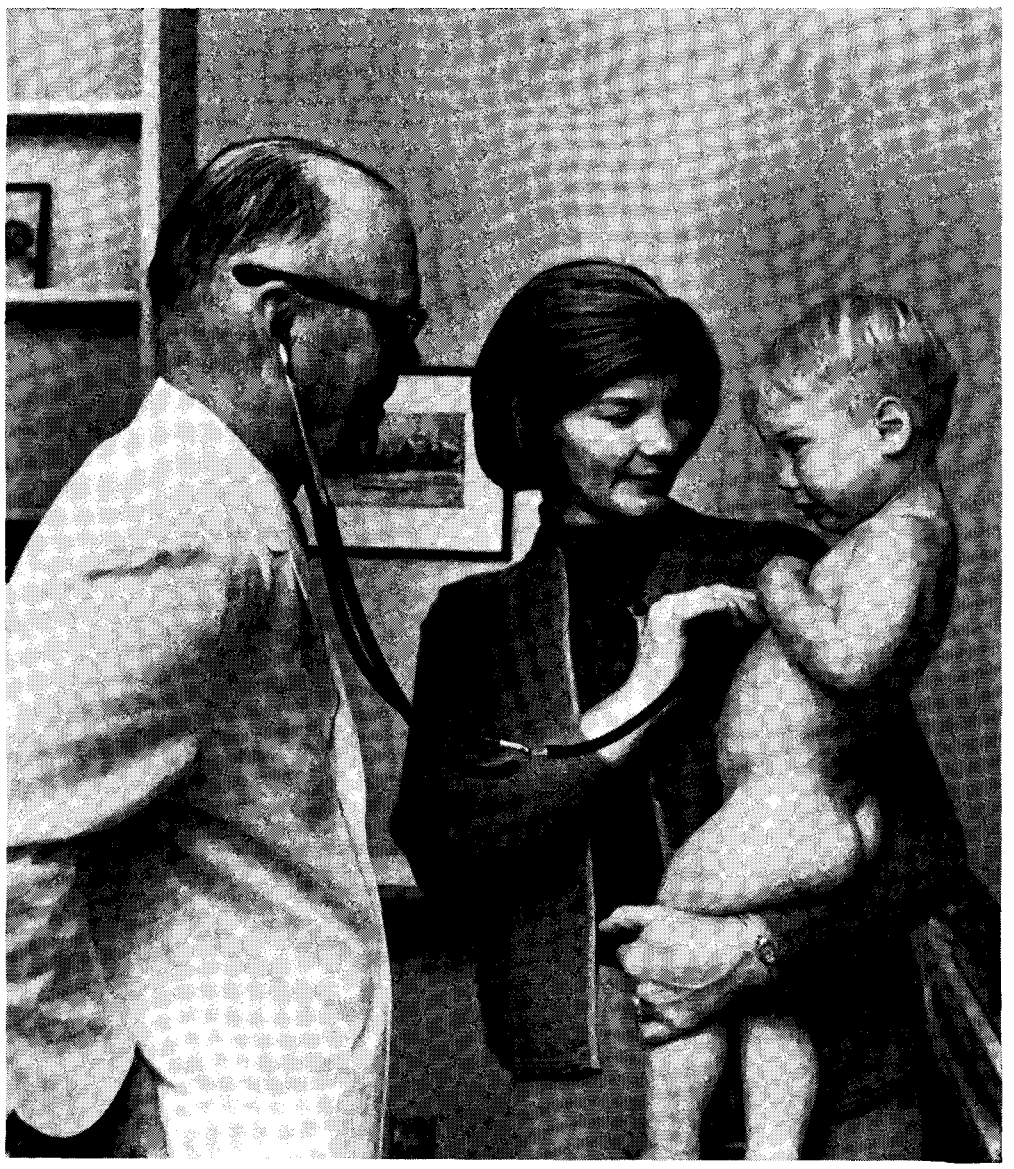

The doctor lets two-year-old Steven Jones, nestled in mother's arm, get acquainted with stethoscope before he gets down to the serious business of making periodic physical examination.

"In pediatrics, as in other branches of medicine, you can't take anything for granted," says the doctor, as he peers through an otoscope to see what makes protesting young patient's throat so sore.

light. He got into the green one, pushed a button under the dashboard, and waited for the radio-controlled garage door to rise. His pink face creased into a broad smile, and his pale blue eyes twinkled behind his glasses.

"Gosh, I get a kick out of that door," he said with a chuckle. "You know, the only time we've ever had trouble with it was once when an airplane flew over at three in the morning and the door flew up. Must have had the same frequency." He was still chuckling as he backed out and drove down Eighth Street into the town where he has spent the last quarter century of his life.

"I suppose by some standards, Fargo isn't much of a town," Pray said, driving in the hard morning light. "But there is something about it that's not easy to explain. The people are friendly, that's part of it. There is a feeling of security too. Maybe the key word is continuity."

Continuity, the supreme virtue of small-town America, was evident everywhere. As Pray drove through the empty streets, he passed houses where he had cared for two generations of children, houses where mothers were feeding their children according to diets he had prescribed, houses where children with fevers were taking medication he had suggested, where adults whose lives he had once saved were drinking coffee and preparing for a day's work. Occasionally a small girl would wave from a porch at the familiar green Buick, or a father in a pick-up truck would honk and shout good morning as the two vehicles passed.

At 8:02 Pray pulled into the parking lot at the rear of the Fargo Clinic. Opened in 1919, the clinic is now housed in a modern red-brick building and is adjacent to St. Luke's Hospital next door. It serves almost 600 patients a day, some of whom have traveled as far as 100 miles to get there. Pray is senior pediatrician (there are three others) and chief of the St. Luke's medical staff. As he walked into the clinic, a patient with a leg in a cast nodded good morning, and a young nurse smiled hello.

In room 210 in the pediatrics department on the second floor, Pray's first work of the morning was waiting for him. Spread out on a green blotter on his white Formica-topped desk were about a dozen phone messages, all from anxious parents. "If a doctor goes into pediatrics," Pray said, "he has to expect a lot of phone calls. So many things come up, and the mothers just want to be sure, more than anything else. But part of being a doctor is that you simply never know what will turn up. You can't take anything for granted."

While Pray made his calls, his chief nurse, Miss Marjorie Stegge, walked in and out with more phone messages. Most were routine: A boy who had spent the night coughing, a girl with a heavy chest cold, four children with sore throats. The doctor's style was calm and assured, and when he spoke, it was always in undertones. One case sounded as if it might be measles, and Doctor Pray told the mother to try to bring the child in that afternoon. Another was a teen-ager who had come down with a mysterious ailment that was keeping her home. She had symptoms of nothing except a severe allergy to school, but the doctor said he would stop by that evening on his way home.

"That's part of the job," he said, shrugging, for he had examined the gi before. "Sometimes you have to be a part-time psychiatrist."

Then Pray was finished with the morning's phone calls, and he left his small office and walked through a connecting door to St. Luke's. Although there is a new air-conditioned wing, the children's department is in an older building, which has a comfortable, old-shoe feeling and, remarkably, does not have the hospital smell of ether and ammonia. Pray walked past some Norman Rockwell reproductions of overcute children, scattered a flock of white-gowned nurses, picked up some charts and entered a small elevator. It was 9:05 now, and Pray was running about 10 minutes behind his daily routine: first, more phone calls, and then the nursery where the newborn children of Fargo and the surrounding towns passed from the care of an obstetrician to that of a pediatrician. It is in the nursery, in fact, that his job really begins. "In Fargo we start caring for them a few hours after birth," Doctor Pray said, "and keep at it, if the child and the parents want us to, until they're eighteen."

The nursery was divided into three glass-partitioned rooms. From outside the glass observation window, the infant in the stainless-steel cribs had a curiou unreal quality: Their mouths were open but no sound could be heard; they moved their small arms and legs, but the effect was of a motion picture whose projector was moving at the wrong speed; it was as if they had not yet adjusted to the rhythms of life.

Doctor Pray washed his well-manicured hands with a special antibiotic soap,

'Sometimes you have to be a part-time psychiatrist.'

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pulled on a gown and face mask, and went into the room on the left. There, in an incubator whose glass walls were sweating, a one-pound, four-ounce premature boy was kicking his small red legs and crying. Mrs. Betty Pederson, a nurse, helped the doctor on with his rubber gloves, and he put his hands through two openings in the side of the incubator and examined the child.

"Except for his weight," he told Mrs. Pederson, "he's doing fine."

Then he went into the other room, here seven young children were making the first noises of their lives. He examined each separately, his fingers running over the small bodies expertly and precisely. There were, he explained, certain things he watched for: the color of the skin, the breathing, the movement of arms and legs. With a stethoscope he listened to the beat of the small hearts and the sound of the lungs. Then, with his hands, he felt the abdomen, searching for unexplained masses. If the stomach were too full or too large, the infant could have a tumor, or a cystic kidney, or an enlarged liver or spleen. On this morning, one child had a stomach fuller than normal and Pray ordered X rays. "It's probably nothing," he said. "But we must check." He checked all the infants for infections or hernias of the umbilicus, examined the genitalia, moved the legs to observe any possible hip dislocation, and even observed the shape of the children's feet. This was all done with the swift facility of the professional. After each examination he washed his hands. Then, removing his mask, he toured the maternity ward, chatting briefly with each of the mothers, telling each that her child was fine. He was briefed on each by Mrs. Pederson, who carried charts. On the way back down to the elevator, a visitor stopped at the nurse's desk and asked for the name of the premature infant.

"You want the name of the preemie?" a young girl in a gray uniform said. Her face was pale. "Oh, I'd have to ask the head nurse."

The head nurse, a red-haired woman who looked like head nurses everywhere, had disappeared for the moment. Another nurse, with obvious seniority, came over. "The name of the preemie?" she said. She seemed pale too. Then Doctor Pray came over.

"Oh," he said, "I forgot. That's an out-of-wedlock baby. We really shouldn't mention the name."

On the way down in the elevator, Pray said philosophically that such things happen, even in Fargo, but that the young nurses always get more upset about it than those who have been around a bit more. It was 9:45 now, and he got off again on the second floor, and walked into the children's ward.

The variety of cases, Pray said, was the major reason he found pediatrics such a satisfying branch of medicine, and on this morning he had a little bit of everything. In one room a seven-year-old boy in bed with tubes in his nose and a tube in one of his arms. He had been hit by a truck and first hospitalized in a town about 70 miles from Fargo 10 days before. With severe internal injuries and the possibility of peritonitis, he had been transferred to St. Luke's only the day before. "How are you feeling this morning?" Doctor Pray asked.

The boy didn't answer. His eyes looked hurt and stunned, as if his body knew how seriously it had been damaged, but the mind was just beginning to receive the message.

"He was much more comfortable last night, Doctor," a nurse said. The doctor nodded, and told the nurse to notify him as soon as possible after a neurologist's examination, which was scheduled later that morning.

He crossed the hall to another room, and examined a boy recovering from pneumonia, who still had some fluid in his chest. He checked a premature baby from another hospital, who had been referred to St. Luke's because of the good reputation of the Fargo Clinic pediatricians. Then he said good-bye to eight-year-old Larry Jones, who had recovered from a bronchitis attack. Larry's mother was dressing him to go home. "Call me right away," Doctor Pray told Mrs. Jones, "if you notice anything unusual."

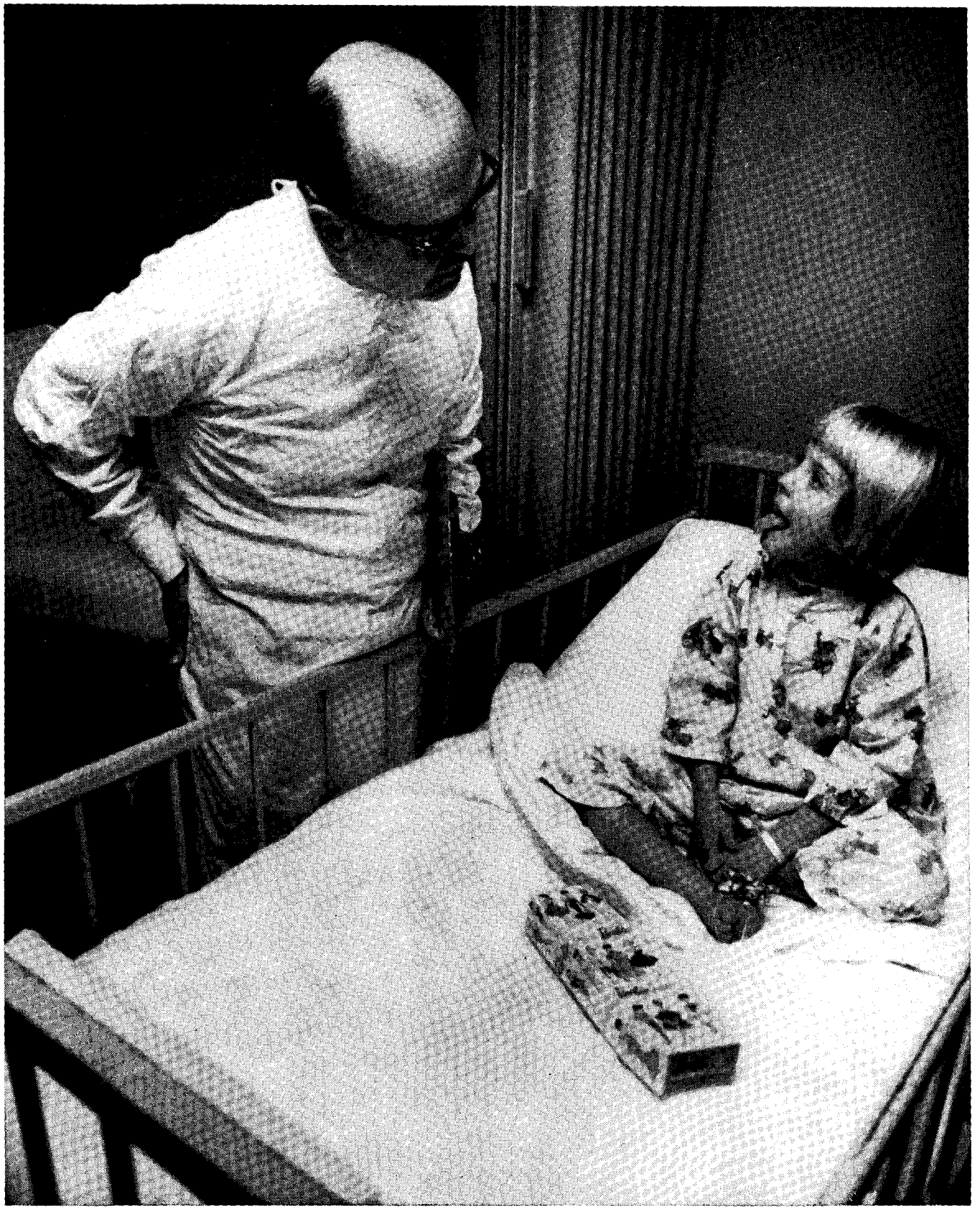
The mother was beaming. "I will, Doctor, and thank you."

At the end of the corridor he visited a two-year-old girl with an intestinal disorder, who was standing up in her crib and screaming for her mother. There were red and yellow blocks in the crib and a small wind-up monkey, but she ignored them, and wouldn't let the doctor touch her. He talked in a soothing manner, and after a while she was quiet. He told her she was much better, and that if she kept on being a good girl, he would let her go home. She was winding up the monkey in calm silence when he left.

By 10:30 A.M. Laurence Pray was back in his small windowless but cheerful office, receiving the first patients of the day. They came in a steady stream: kids with black eyes, and kids with sore throats, and infants for routine check-ups. Between sessions, Pray talked a bit about the changes in pediatrics in the years he has practiced. The major difference, he said, has been the almost total defeat of such killing and crippling diseases as polio and tuberculosis. In 1946 and 1949 Fargo was hit with about 90 cases of polio in each year. With the development of the Salk and Sabin vaccines, there has not been a polio case in the area in six years, and the last one, in 1958, was a visitor from another town.

"We'll simply never know how many

On rounds at St. Luke's Hospital Doctor Pray checks up on Mary Lamon the day after her tonsils and adenoids were removed.



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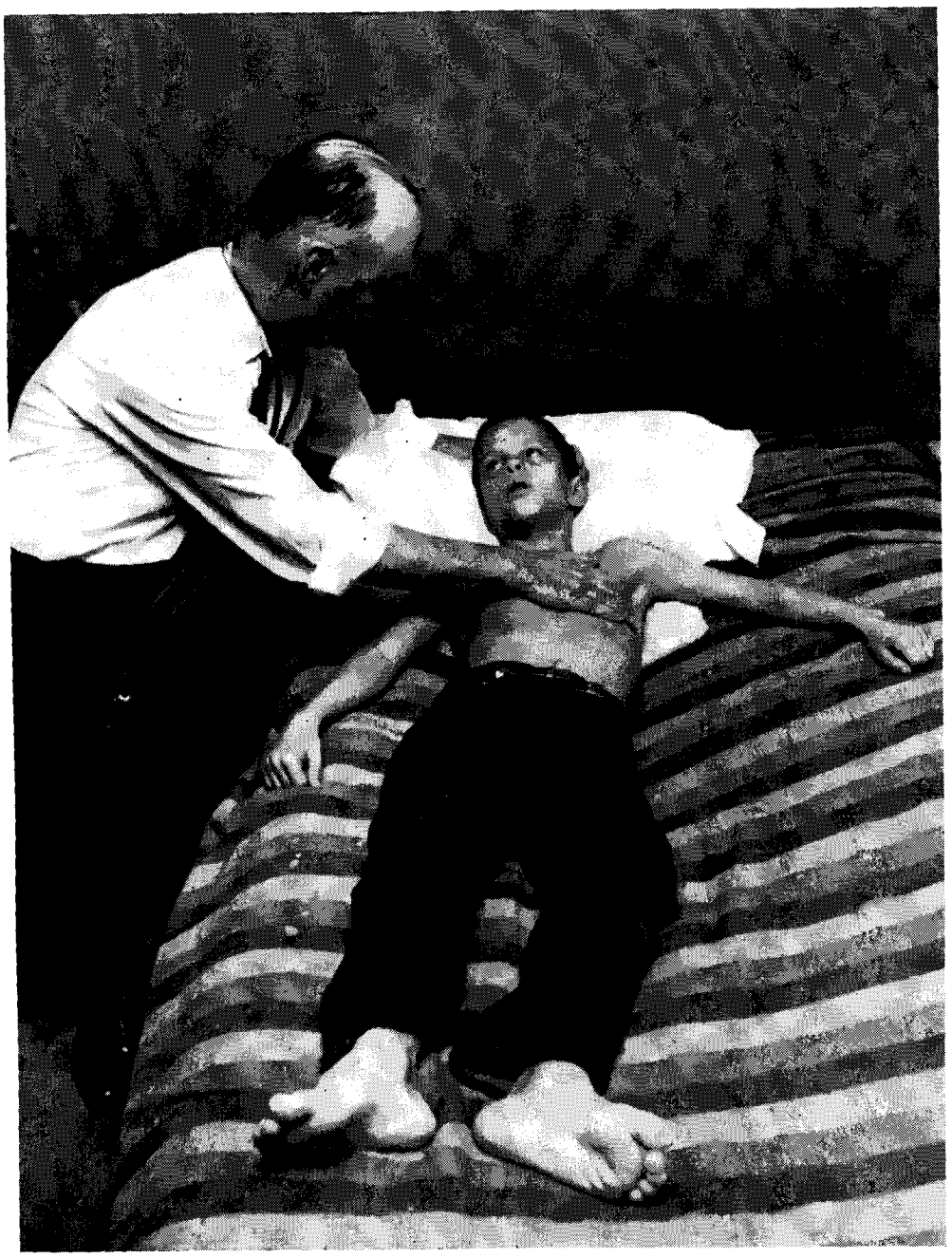

"Where does it hurt?" Dr. Laurence Pray asks his namesake, Jerry Laurence Scherling. "Hurts all over," Jerry murmurs. He had just fallen out of a tree. But the doctor found he was only shaken up.

'Thanks to the vaccines, we haven't had a polio case in the area in six years.'

A PEDIATRICIAN'S DAY

lives were saved by those vaccines," Pray said. Today the bulk of the serious illnesses are respiratory infections. The pediatrician's day is nothing at all like the glamorous TV life led by such as Ben Casey and Doctor Kildare, where each week a different patient's physical, psychological and moral problems are placed in the doctors' hands. It is quiet, sometimes routine work, Pray said, but satisfying. Above all, satisfying. "The triumphs are small," he said thoughtfully. "And the defeats are no easier to take than in any other branch of medicine."

At 12 o'clock Pray left for lunch, the weekly meeting of the Kiwanis Club at the Graver Hotel. On the way he talked a bit about his two sons. Ralph, 21, was now attending Grinnell College in Iowa, and Dean was at Cornell College in the same state. Both had decided to go into medicine. "It was certainly not at my urging that they chose medicine," Pray said. "We never even discussed it. I suppose they feel that my life has been a full and happy one. It made me very happy to have them do this, though it is their own business."

Pray's father had been a doctor in Valley City, N. Dak., for 45 years, but, like Pray, had never urged his sons to follow his footsteps. Yet two did. Laurence and an older brother, Ralph, now deceased, both became pediatricians. Laurence went to the University of North Dakota and then the University of California, from which he graduated in 1926. "I kind of drifted into medicine," he says, "but it wasn't an easy thing to do in the depression years. I borrowed during my first two years in medical school at Washington University in St. Louis, and worked nights and weekends the last two years. After obtaining my medical degree in 1935, I took a rotating internship at the St. Louis City Hospital—I was an assistant resident at the Isolation Hospital—and after that I put in three months at St. Louis Children's Hospital. Those three months changed my life." That was 1936—the year that Pray married Helen Van Atta, a nurse at Barnes Hospital.

As Pray talked, the streets of Fargo slid by. Young men in thick plaid shirts and baggy pants stood on Broadway, a street of hardware stores, diners, banks and clothing shops. There were a number of banks, Pray explained, because, although the population of the state is only 650,000, Fargo is the largest city and therefore a kind of financial center.

At the suggestion of his professor in St. Louis, Pray trained in pediatrics at Johns Hopkins for three years under the distinguished Dr. Edwards A. Park (whose photo hangs on Pray's wall) and in 1939 moved on to Columbia Presbyterian's Babies Hospital in New York under Dr. Rustin McIntosh. "It was, I suppose, the most exciting time of my life, to be young and working in New York," said Pray.

But the pull of the open spaces of the upper Midwest began to work on him. His brother, Ralph, a pediatrician at the Fargo Clinic since 1928, decided in 1941 to head for the lush West Coast. Laurence was offered a position at the clinic, and moved from New York in 1941. He has been there ever since. And now, on this overcast winter afternoon, in the 60th year of his life, Pray was on his way to that epitome of life in midwestern America, the Kiwanis Club Luncheon.

"Hi, Larry," said a beefy, black-haired man at the door. Pray smiled and said hello. Then he picked up a plate and passed along the buffet table, which was stacked with radishes and salad, ham and macaroni and braised potatoes. "If that's not enough for you, Larry, just holler," said the greeter, letting out an inexplicable guffaw. "It's plenty, it's plenty," Pray said, smiling uneasily.

Inside, all the tables were crowded. There was a lot of heavy laughter, and much backslapping. When everyone was finished, a small gong was sounded, and all stood and faced the flag at the front of the hall and sang *America*. When that was over, a man named John Carlson, built like a football player running to fat, stood up and shouted a number, and the members picked up songbooks and turned to *The Rose of Tralee*. "This is a love song, you guys, so put yer *heart* in it!" Carlson cried.

Pray seemed faintly embarrassed; he is a man with a sense of the correct place of things and events in his life, and it did not seem as if singing at the top of his lungs had any place at all.

In the election of officers of the Kiwanis, Pray was an unopposed candidate for second vice president, an honor he obviously enjoyed. In the city of Fargo he is one of the more distinguished citizens: a vice president of the school board, a past president of the Cass County Mental Health Association, active in the Fargo-Moorhead Opportunity School, which serves physically handicapped and mentally retarded children. Ten years ago he led a successful fight for fluoridization of the city's water system. In 1960 he was chairman of a committee on the emotional needs of children and youth in North Dakota and attended a National White House Conference on the subject the same year. "I've tried to do my part in civic and community activities," he said diffidently.

The guests and members then listened to some brief remarks from Mark Andrews, a Republican representative who was running for office. Pray rose to thank Andrews for coming, and said later that he took care of the congressman's children. "Very fine man, with very fine wife and children," Pray said. In Republican North Dakota, Pray has been a registered Republican all his life, but "I'm certainly not a Southern California Republican," he explained, driving back to the clinic after the luncheon. "They can get pretty wild," he said.

In the afternoon Pray's routine followed the pattern of the morning. A few phone calls, and then patients. He saw a nine-month-old baby with an eye infection, a 17-year-old girl with mononucleosis, a boy who refused to eat. Then at 3:35 he received a phone call from Mrs. Orlando K. Scherling. One of her twin sons had just fallen out of a tree, and she was afraid that he might have either fractured his skull or hurt his back. Doctor Pray said he would be right out.

In his car on the way to the Scherling home, Pray said that house calls were no' as frequent as they once were. "That's one of the advantages of the clinic idea," he said. "The patients realize they get better medicine if they come in, so most of the time they do."

Mrs. Scherling, a compact, handsome woman, led Pray into the twins' room, where Jerry Laurence, 10, was lying on his back in bed. The room was cluttered with games, and on a bureau stood a framed photograph of Doctor Pray.

"How do you feel, Jerry?" the doctor said.

The boy didn't answer.

"Do you have a headache?" The boy shook his head no. "Does it hurt when you breathe?" The boy nodded yes. The doctor put a stethoscope on Jerry's chest, felt his abdomen, and then examined his spine. "Does it hurt anywhere in particular, Jerry?" the doctor said.

"Hurts all over," Jerry said.

"Betcher arm hurts."

"Yeah."

"Well," Pray said, "I think I'll just let you lie quietly."

He walked into the hall with Mrs. Scherling and told her that Jerry was all right, that he was just shaken up and that she should feed him liquids the rest of the evening because he would probably develop an upset stomach. Mrs. Scherling recalled that Doctor Pray had saved Jerry Laurence and his twin brother, Laurence Jerry, from pneumonia when they were infants, and in gratitude Mr. and Mrs. Scherling named both boys after him. The doctor blushed.

"I remember another time," said Mrs. Scherling, "when our oldest boy—he's

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21 now—came down with an allergy from a pony we bought him. Doctor Pray came over and when we asked him what to do he gave us just a few words of advice. 'Don't bring the pony into the house,' he said." She laughed and the doctor laughed and in the other room Jerry Laurence stared at the ceiling.

It was dark when Pray went out to the car, but his day wasn't over. He headed the car across town to the house of the girl who didn't want to go to school. Her parents welcomed the doctor, took his hat, and told him their daughter was in her room. Their faces were weary and troubled. The father talked politics for a while, with a kind of determined energy, as if to get his mind off other things. The mother looked as if she might cry.

"Well, there's nothing physically wrong with her," Pray said, when he emerged from the girl's room.

"I don't understand you, Doctor," the mother said.

"I mean that whatever's the matter with her is happening in her head."

"I agree, I agree," said the father. He seemed relieved to be able to talk about it. "She was going around with this girl from school, and this girl has been forced to leave school, you see. And a lot of her other friends won't even talk to her now. Well, our daughter was very close to this girl, and she stood up for her. She wants to be loyal."

"Well, I've got her to promise me to go to school tomorrow," Doctor Pray said. "And if she still doesn't feel like going, I made her promise to visit me at the clinic."

"Thanks very much for coming by, Doctor," the father said. "I greatly appreciate it."

The doctor's day was almost over. He drove out to his home, ate a leisurely dinner, and then went into his study. The walls were lined with books showing a variety of interests. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* stood hard by *The Book of Knowledge; Reader's Digest* condensed books were on the shelf above Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead.* Paul Horgan's history of the Rio Grande was in the same section as Winston Churchill's history of the Second World War. His wife, a slender, attractive woman, came in and fixed Pray a drink, and he put on a garish, plaid smoking jacket. He then pointed to a pile of medical journals on an end table. "Now I have to start my homework," he said. "You have to run fast to stand still these days."

It was blowy out now, very dark because there was no moon, and then suddenly it was snowing. "It's beautiful here in winter," Pray said. "And that's when children do seem to have so much fun, isn't it? Children playing in the snow are a wonderful thing to see."

As he watched the snow falling on Fargo, two young girls dressed in red coats walked by under the street lamp. They were twins, Laura and Linda Ekern, and Pray had cared for them since their birth eight years before. They spotted the familiar face near the window and waved at the same time, smiling, with the snow melting in their hair. Laurence Pray waved back and returned to his homework. THE END

The doctor walks with Laura and Linda Ekern, eight-year-old twins whom he has known since he cared for them at birth.

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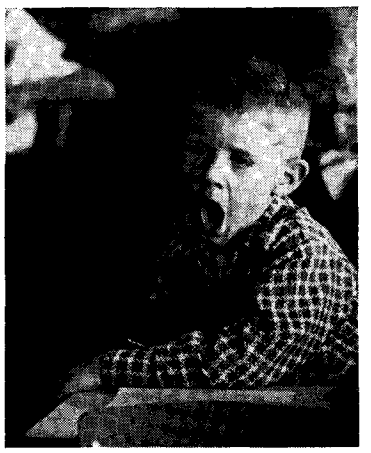

The strangers in our midst

All children are in a sense the children of all men. Mysteriously, children combine something of all who came before. Though our own are elusive, strange and separate, they are uniquely ours. They invoke our deepest feelings and most haunting concerns. Who, watching his children sleep, has not at some time felt a sudden cold sense of his own mortality—the fear of not being there always to protect them. Yet children also provoke every bit of foolishness and anger and confusion in our natures. We march them inexorably into the cross fire of our own lives. In one area where we are most righteously determined to make them invincible, we are likely to fail them the most—that is the area of education.

Of all the things Americans believe in, there are few they believe in so devoutly as education. Our grim obsession with education is almost idolatrous. As a result, no people on earth have ever been subjected to more schooling. Millions of infants now get advanced mathematics in kindergarten (or almost), and start studying French or Spanish in the early grades. There are such wonders as teaching machines in grammar school. Our so-called right to universal education has created a society in which more than one quarter of our population is attending school, and the figure of 53 million, up more than 50 percent in a decade, is expected to rise to 64 million in the coming decade. Since 1930, the money spent annually for elementary and high-school education rose from $2.6 billion to $22 billion—roughly 500 times as much as we spend on the peace-keeping operations of the U.N.

There can be no denying the value of education. Through education a man can give his children a better life than he had. Through education Americans become fit citizens of a democracy. Through education, indeed, Americans become Americans. Yet in our faith in mere schooling, we too often attribute exaggerated values to institutions and programs rather than to the people for whom they were designed. We become lulled into feeling that we can put children into schools as we put biscuits into an oven and expect them to come out done. We assign an overwhelming importance to the formality of education, rather than the love of learning, and then expect a miracle. The mystical thing doesn't happen in the school; it happens in the child.

Education does not mean simply bigger and better schools. "Educate," comes from the Latin word meaning "to lead forth," and it signifies, as Webster reminds us, "To develop and cultivate mentally or morally; to expand, strengthen, and discipline . . . to prepare and fit for any calling. . . ."

Education in this literal and total sense can be only partially achieved in the schools. And although there is not a parent in the world who doesn't sigh with relief at getting the children off to school, it is partly the sigh of relief with which one shunts aside one's own responsibilities. To the extent that we continue to avoid these responsibilities, we see our children grow up uneducated. No institution ever gave a child tenderness, compassion, a lively curiosity, quick humor, self-confidence—these qualities grow in response to the all-encompassing education, the "leading forth," that only parents can provide. Only we can kindle in our own children the movements in the spirit that mysteriously evolve into permanent qualities of character and mind.

Without those qualities, our lavishly schooled children will receive very little real education at all.

The child who never reads a book unless he has to is not educated.

The child who doesn't marvel at nature or respond to beauty is an uneducated child.

The child who is pointlessly cruel or who lies because he can get away with it—this child is uneducated.

This does not mean that every child should be turned into a combination of Tom Sawyer and Pascal. But the average child who sets off for school at the age of five or six is already a creature who combines, undeveloped and unsynthesized, the best and worst of our characteristics—he is full of courage and cowardice, loyalty and deceit, curiosity, imagination and a sense of wonder. In the next dozen years, the machinery of schooling will grind and polish him into an average social being. The machinery will break a few children in the process, but it will turn most of them into respectable wage earners and citizens.

Yet education is a more subtle process. As surely as a child combines the physical appearance of his father and mother, so his mind will reflect the total education that they have given him—or failed to give him.

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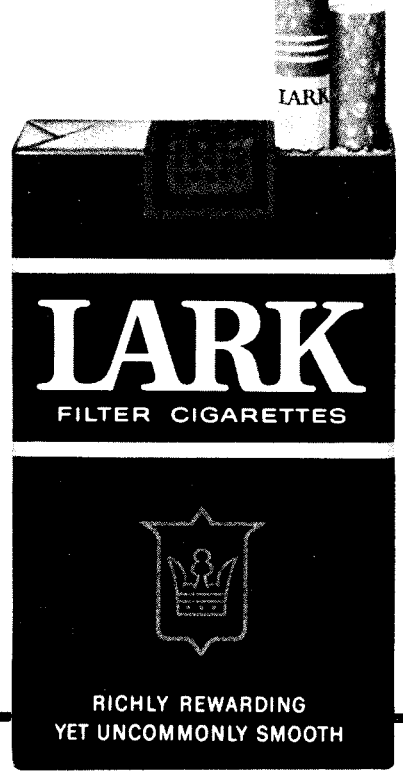

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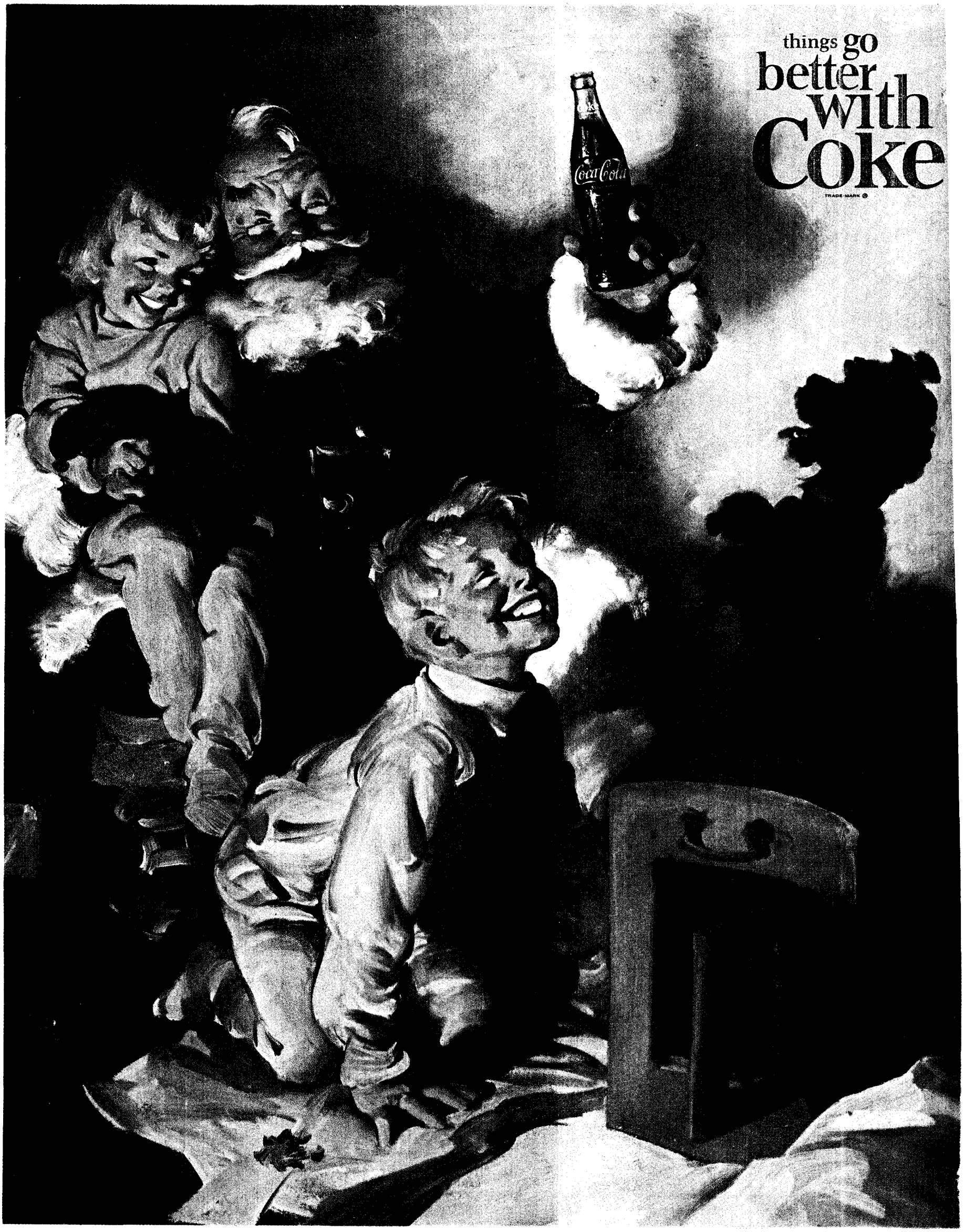

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